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COUNTRY LIFE

Vol. CI No. 2624

MAY 2, 1947



Harlip

MISS BRIDGET WATNEY

Miss Bridget Watney, who is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. D. A. Watney and a grand-daughter of Sir George Bonner, is working for the United Nations in Switzerland

COUNTRY LIFE

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THE LOCAL JIG-SAW

DURING the war the Coalition Government resisted the often repeated appeal to set up a Royal Commission to review the areas and powers of local authorities over the country as a whole so as to put into better order the jig-saw puzzle set by many centuries of history and a long period of Victorian "reform" followed by haphazard social development. It was generally admitted that a stage had been reached where many authorities were without the financial resources to carry out their duties effectively, or to provide the services required of them. Others were unsatisfactory because their outlook was as meagre as their area and their sense of public duty. Apart from these anachronisms there were many larger authorities in the densely populated parts of the country whose chance of carrying out their functions effectively obviously depended upon increases of territory. A century ago a Royal Commission could have met for five years to deliberate on a radical rearrangement, which would have been presented to Parliament as a single scheme and might—or might not—have been adopted. In this case the view was taken that local government was in a fluid and not a static condition, and that what was required was a current system of review which would keep pace with the administrative demands of a rapidly changing social economy. By the Act of 1945 a Statutory Commission was appointed to examine problems in order according to their urgency.

The Local Government Boundary Commission have now published their first Report (for 1946), which tells how they propose to conduct their investigations, and also of their proceedings up to date. The complexity of their work is very evident. In every case into which they enquire common or inter-related problems affect a number of local authorities, which means that the several areas cannot be dealt with in isolation, but must be reviewed at one and the same time. As local government is at present organised, services are provided either by the "one-tier" system (county borough councils) or by the "two-tier" system (county councils and county district councils). The Report summarises statistics relating to area, population and rateable value, and comes to the conclusion that the figures afford a strong case on paper for drastic alterations. It is useless, however, the Commissioners point out, only to consider the dry figures at a desk and do arithmetic. Mere formulae will not improve local government. Each area has its own local problems and its own characteristics, patriotisms and affinities and must be examined on the spot. This involves a vast number of conferences with the authorities of all areas likely to be affected. The review of five areas in Staffordshire and Worcestershire, and of four areas in

Somerset and Gloucestershire, to take comparatively simple instances, has already involved conferences with thirty and twenty-three authorities respectively. In other parts of the country proposals are much more complex. In East Anglia, for instance, they include one for uniting four counties, and another for creating a new county out of four whole counties and parts of three others.

In the recent past most alterations have taken place by the limited extension of county boroughs nibbling into the countryside of the surrounding counties. There are new proposals for very large extensions of such boroughs, and these proposals, if carried through, would not only eat into the county's administration to a crippling extent, but would in many industrial areas involve the creation of a solid block of

THE MAP

TWO years ago this map was ink and paper,
Its fields a blank, its villages a name;
Lived in, it's true, but empty as a vapour
To us before we came.

Now, as we pass, the waste is cultivated.

We pluck the leaves, and straight a forest grows.
You watch the train; a railway is created.

I point; a river flows.

Here, where the contours gaze across the valley,
You kissed me. Here's your name upon the tree.
The map records them all with faithful tally—
A Land of You and Me.

Sweet colonist, you planted these oases.

You made the desert blossom with your Spring.
The wilderness and the solitary places
Rejoice and sing.

JOHN WAUDBY.

county boroughs which would make the present system of county government impossible. A much more promising proposal is that for the creation of new county areas within which the existing county boroughs would relinquish their present status. This suggestion has been discussed recently by a number of local authorities in the Manchester area. The effect in this case would be to create a county of almost entirely urban character, relatively small in area but with a large population and rateable value. It has been brought to the notice of the Local Government Commission by the Manchester and Salford Corporations, who appear to regard it as a promising policy which would provide a "district" government with the local interest peculiar to it, and at the same time would ensure the maintenance of the major local government services over an area far wider than any existing authority could deal with. If such a Manchester County Council were thought advisable, what of other existing conurbations which might be reorganised on the same principle? A proposal for similar regrouping has been put forward by the Royal Commission on the Tyneside, and the Local Government Commission themselves suggest that the case of Middlesex is not dissimilar.

THE NASH TERRACES

ANY immediate fears about the future of the Regent's Park terraces have been allayed by the findings of Lord Gorell's Committee and the Government's acceptance of the two main conclusions embodied in their Report that the terraces should be preserved and that their long-term use should be residential. The Committee have been at great pains to investigate the position in all its aspects, and as only brief summaries of their excellent Report have appeared in the Press, we think that readers will be interested in the more detailed account which we publish in this issue. As two-thirds of the houses are now temporarily occupied by the Ministry of Works—the process of first-aid repairs and conversion has been going on while the Committee were sitting—no final decisions could be taken, and these are shelved until other accommodation for the Ministry can be found and supplies of labour and materials are available for thorough-going repairs or reconstruction. The two outstanding considerations are the serious inroads of dry rot, into which Dr. Oscar Faber has made searching enquiry,

and the cost, running into millions, of any plans for rehabilitation. To preserve the terraces is not an economic proposition, but the Committee are of the opinion that their importance outweighs considerations of cost. A welcome proposal is for a music centre to be formed on the site of Someries House and Cambridge Terrace, which are of no architectural value, and linked with this are suggestions for students' hostels for London University. The east side of the park might well become a new cultural and academic quarter of London.

ST. PAUL'S AND POWER

IT is difficult to believe that, in approving the monstrous plan for a large power station opposite St. Paul's Cathedral, the Cabinet was not panicked into a decision by the power crisis. The electricity shortage, we are told, is only temporary; nationalisation of the mines and distribution will soon remedy it. But the injury to England's greatest architecture and to the amenities, present and future, of central London, would be permanent and irreparable—although atomic power is envisaged as a certainty within a generation. At the official enquiry the L.C.C. which strongly opposed the proposal, offered an alternative site at Rotherhithe within six months. Subsequently it was found that this would not be available for two years. In order that there may be some increase in electricity supply 18 months earlier, the whole plan and aspect of central London as advocated by every responsible authority is to be sacrificed. It is not a question of the design of the building. No eminent architect or Fine Arts Commission can overcome the inevitable duality which will be set up in every view of the City by two dominating masses where now there is only one; by a temple of Mammon juxtaposed to the other. Nor is it a matter of party politics, as the criticisms in the House showed. It is a national issue in which a weak, short-sighted and disastrous decision must be reversed.

LANDLORD AND TENANT

IN the House of Commons the Agriculture Bill has now passed the Committee stage. No major amendments have been accepted by the Government, but the Minister has promised to look again at several clauses before the Bill is finally debated. One of these is Clause 30, which seeks to impose further restrictions on a landlord's right to give notice to an unsatisfactory tenant, and which would, if left as it stands in the Bill, result in the landlord who tries to manage his estate well and set a high standard for his tenant being powerless unless he secures the Minister's consent to a notice to quit. The Minister does not, of course, in practice mean Mr. Tom Williams or his successor, but a Civil Servant who has no practical knowledge to guide his judgment. Everyone agrees that the land speculator who buys estates and ousts the tenants for quick profit of re-sale is a menace, but this clause would hamstring the 99 landlords who have no sinister designs in order to catch the one who cares only for his own pocket.

FRESH AIR AND EXERCISE

EVERYBODY must sympathise with the aim of the National Sports Development Fund of the Central Council of Physical Recreation, which has lately been launched at the Mansion House. That aim is to give people opportunity and encouragement to take part in some form of physical exercise in the open air. Clearly opportunity must come first, since without it encouragement is vain, and space is the most important consideration, but granted the space the desire to use it needs fostering. There is certainly no lack of interest in games, as witness the vast crowds of spectators on a Saturday afternoon, but mere looking on, however frenzied the emotions of partisanship, is from the point of view of national well-being a poor substitute for playing. The middle-aged have earned their static excitement, but it would be a bad thing if the youth of the day were to be satisfied with purely vicarious exercise. To say this is not to decry looking on altogether; it is good and dramatic fun enough and it is done out of doors, but for the young and vigorous the playing is the thing, and no amount of shouting from the touch-line can make up for its absence.



Frank Rodgers

IN SPRING'S SOFT SUNSHINE

A COUNTRYMAN'S NOTES

By

Major C. S. JARVIS

AT the end of the first week in April I had occasion to drive through the south-east corner of Dorset, and the rich farm lands on either side of the road were then in a sorry state of unavoidable neglect. Except for the winter wheat, which looked far healthier than one had any right to expect, none of the arable fields had been touched since November and, after the mantle of snow that had covered them for weeks, they looked derelict and dirty-white with the dried bents of last autumn's weeds. Five days later when I passed that way the whole countryside seemed to have changed, for the hot sunny days that followed the weeks of frost and drenching rain, combined with the tireless energy of the various farmers, had resulted in almost every field being ploughed and cultivated; in many instances sowing also had taken place. * * *

IT was nearly 10 p.m. by the clock, but from every direction one could hear the rattle of tractors working with the very last of the light, and in one field I saw two stationary cars with their headlamps shining down the furrows to guide the ploughman. So far as this particular corner of England is concerned, owing to the extraordinary efforts of the farmers and their men, we have almost caught up with the calendar, so that the future is no longer quite so black as it was painted. All this has been done without any unctuous applause and pats on the back from politicians, and with no promise of extra rations for the labourer or nylon stockings for his hard-worked wife. The only reward the farmer obtains for his efforts to feed the nation is Double Summer Time, which gets him out of bed at 3 a.m. by the sun and allows him to return to it at 11 p.m. by the clock on those nights when his livestock is so disposed as to retire early.

I WAS reminded of this when I passed a newly-ploughed field at dusk, which was rapidly becoming darkness, and noticed a flock of birds that I could not identify owing to the failing light, actively at work in the furrows. On stopping the car, I discovered that they were a pack of jolly old farm-yard ducks having a really uproarious time among the wire- and earth-worms in the freshly-turned soil. It was a pleasing sight in some ways, but I wonder if the townsman, who revels in D.S.T. and his long evenings at the "dogs" and other amusements, realises what it means to the man who works all day and then has to get his birds shut up at night against the raiding fox. I wonder also if the townsman has ever tried to get a clutch of four-month-old Indian runner ducks into their ark a moment before they themselves decide the time has arrived for them to make it a day. Genesis does not relate what variety of duck it was that voyaged in the Ark with Noah, but if they were Indian runners I am convinced that they caused a considerable amount of trouble before they consented to go aboard. * * *

IT would seem that the grey mullet, and not the red, was regarded as the very greatest delicacy in ancient Rome. According to Seneca, one Octavius, wishing to curry favour with royalty, bought a giant specimen of 4½ lb. for the equivalent of £40 and presented it to the Emperor Tiberius, and Pliny records fish of over 2 lb. selling for the fabulous sum of £64 each. There is something to be said therefore for controlled prices for fish, but I have an idea that even in those days, though the censor in Rome did try to control prices, he was usually defeated by a

most efficient black market. Another historian relates how a certain Lucius bought, after much haggling with the salesman, 20 *denarii's* worth of fish for his dinner, but on his way home the aedile, the local Enforcement Officer, seized the fish and destroyed it, as the price paid was regarded as extravagant.

In Egypt we used to obtain big grey mullet, which had fattened themselves up on *algae* in a land-locked sea lake, and these were certainly excellent. It is difficult after a lapse of ten years, in a totally different climate, and with a palate that must have become vitiated after the fifth-rate fare of the last two or three years, to draw comparisons between those mullet of the southern Mediterranean and the best fish obtainable in these isles. I have a belief, however, that these mullet, which had a flavour all their own, were just a shade better even than a sole, but this refers only to the super-fatted ones just over the 2 lb. mark from the land-locked lake. * * *

THE grey mullet is a fish one sees but rarely on the fishmonger's slab in this country, and on the only occasion when I managed to obtain one I was most bitterly disappointed; even the chickens made derogatory remarks about its quality. The mullet, like the mackerel, is apparently one of those fish that must be eaten almost immediately after it is taken from the water, and the mullet I tried in England a year ago had apparently travelled many weary miles from its home waters, and had possibly suffered in its crate from the effects of a "go slow" strike at the market. There must be many readers of COUNTRY LIFE who, living on estuaries and sea inlets that this fish frequents and being in a position to eat the mullet fresh from the water, can confirm, or otherwise, my high opinion of them.

A PLAN TO RECLAIM THE WASH

By J. WENTWORTH DAY



ELY CATHEDRAL FROM THE RIVER OUSE, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

THE disastrous floods in the Fens draw attention to a plan that would add at least 100,000 acres of land to England and, at the same time, materially improve the drainage of the Fens themselves. That plan has lain unheeded in Government pigeon-holes for 108 years. It should be brought out, dusted and put into action.

The plan was drawn up by Sir John Rennie, one of the greatest civil engineers of all time, in

1839. Rennie was commissioned by a committee of Lincolnshire and Norfolk landowners and others to produce a plan for the reclamation of the Wash. He did so. The plan has never been acted on.

Meanwhile, the Dutch, a smaller and poorer nation than ourselves, have gone ahead with, and completed, a somewhat similar plan, on a scale eight or ten times larger. They have succeeded. The result to-day is that something like

890,000 acres of the Zuyder Zee have been embanked from the sea and most of the area added to the fertile soil of Holland.

The two problems are not unlike; the two plans are not dissimilar; but the Dutch got on with the job.

Rennie's plan was to throw a great dam or embankment, about 20 miles long, across the mouth of the Wash from Gibraltar Point in Lincolnshire to a point north-east of Hunstanton in Norfolk. The area enclosed would be roughly 20 miles long by 20 miles wide. It would embrace about 150,000 acres, of which, it is estimated, a great part of 100,000 acres would be convertible into some of the richest farm-lands in the world in a very few years. The other 50,000 acres would probably have to remain as water.

The great bank or dam would contain huge sea-gates or locks through which the combined waters of the four main Fen rivers, the Great Ouse, the Nene, the Witham and the Welland would flow in one combined outfall or main channel.

It is claimed that this plan would materially aid the drainage

of the Fens and prevent a repetition of the disastrous floods which, during the last few months, laid waste something like 60,000 acres of land, since there would be no question of the river outfalls continually silting up among the sand-banks of the Wash, as they do at present. Further, the 50,000 acres of enclosed water or low-lying swamp would act as a great catch-water reservoir for inland floods, any overplus from which could be pumped out through the main sea-locks, just as the waters of the Middle Level are now pumped out into the lower reaches of the Great Ouse by the pumping station at St. Germans. That pumping station, probably the best in England, is capable of discharging several thousand tons of water per minute.

This plan to reclaim the Wash, and a number of minor variations of it, have been discussed, put forward, discredited and argued, for and against, periodically, for many years. The principle remains unanswerable. That principle is that, in the area of the Wash, we have many thousands of acres of incredibly rich silt land, particularly on the Lincolnshire side, that are overflowed by the tide for only a few hours each day. Paradoxically, those waste saltings actually lie *higher* than thousands of acres of the rich farm-lands that constitute the Marshland district of West Norfolk and the Fen districts of South Lincolnshire. One has only to stand on the sea-wall at say, Dawsmere, or on the wall at Freiston Shore, near Boston, and this fact is apparent to the naked eye.

On the West Norfolk coast piece-meal reclamation has been carried out for a number of years round and about North Wootton and in near-by parishes. Some of that reclaimed land was sold to a friend of mine just before the recent war for £54 an acre. It is already worth much more.

Opponents of the scheme point out that much of the bed of the Wash consists of sand-banks, which borings have shown extend to a depth of from 20 ft. to 25 ft. below the low-water mark of spring tides. They contend that these great areas of sand would be as useless for agricultural purposes as the silt land saltings of Lincolnshire and the marshes of North Wootton would be valuable. That remains to be seen. But it should not be forgotten that a great deal of sandy land will grow oats, rye, turnips, carrots and other good crops. Moreover, it can be overlaid or mixed with clay just as the Breckland landowners of West Norfolk clayed their rabbit warrens a century ago. Their land was clayed by hand labour, the cost of which would be prohibitive to-day. But with modern mechanical methods, I see no reason why caterpillar bul-



BOSTON STUMP TOWERS ABOVE THE RIVER WITHAM IN LINCOLNSHIRE



THE CLIFFS TO THE NORTH-EAST OF HUNSTANTON. The cliffs on this part of the Wash are friable

cozers and tractors should not be able to carry out the work comparatively cheaply.

Another objection is that in parts the Wash is 165 ft. deep. The answer to that, surely, is that although there may be and are, great depths of water in both Lynn Deeps and Boston Deeps, these deep channels would not only form natural water-ways for the Fen rivers, but would provide, as they do now, valuable fisheries. They would become a series of great inland lakes, probably surpassing in size, depth and ultimate diversity of scenery, the Norfolk Broads. And one or more of those lakes could provide a great flying-boat base. After all, the total water area of the whole of the Broads district is little more than 5,000 acres; yet it has an immense tourist and recreational value, apart from its attraction for the naturalist. England can well do with such an addition to her amenities.

If the scheme ever comes to fulfilment, I can foresee not only the creation of thousands of acres of farm-land, but the appearance on the map of chains of great shining lakes, surrounded by waving reed-beds, the haunt of innumerable

wild-fowl, plover, wading birds, warblers and others whose natural haunts in the Fens and on the Broads have year by year been whittled away remorselessly. Thus we should gain not only in a material sense, but vastly in amenity value.

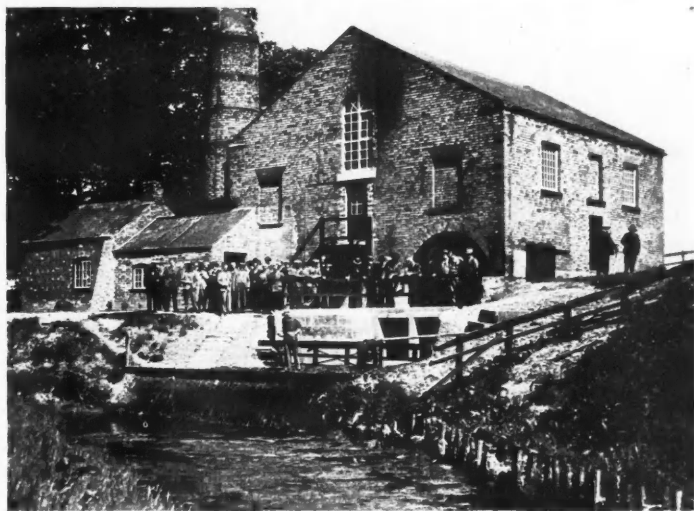
The main differences between the Wash scheme and the Zuider Zee plan are these. The greatest depth of water in the Zuider Zee is about 25 ft., while the greatest depth at low water in the Wash is about 165 ft. The tidal range at the entrance to the Zuider Zee is only 4 ft., while in the Wash it is 24 ft. The main Zuider Zee dam is about 18¾ miles long and en-

the war, will considerably offset all the estimates of cost arrived at in pre-war days. It would obviously be fruitless for me, as a layman, to attempt to hazard a guess at present-day costs, when the value of the £ seems to fluctuate almost from month to month. That is a matter for the expert engineers and accountants to decide.

The main and unanswerable principle is that here is much rich land waiting to be reclaimed. Here is much other land which, although some of it may be of debatable value, should be capable of being turned into a national asset. Here is a scheme which, if completed, would more than offset the mounting total of land lost elsewhere on our coasts by erosion. Here, too, is a plan that might well solve the problem of the Fen floods for ever and a day.

Surely this nation, which has successfully harnessed the Nile and improved hundreds of thousands of acres of Egyptian river lands; which has tamed the Indus, controlled the Ganges and successfully irrigated the vast deserts of Sind; surely this nation can turn its thoughts, brains and money towards the reclamation of its own land at home.

Partial reclamation, as I have said, has been going on for years on the Norfolk shores of the Wash. The principle has been to throw out great banks into the shallow parts of the sea, across saltings that are overflowed only by spring tides and, while the tides continue to drop their deposit of alluvial mud within the horns of those banks, gradually to enclose the areas between the banks. The earliest bank of the kind was made in 1847. More land was reclaimed in 1871. Still more was embanked between 1907 and 1910. German prisoners worked on it during the 1914-18 war, but the scheme was unfinished when the Armistice was signed. However, under the



THE PUMPING STATION AT MARTIN FEN IN LINCOLNSHIRE

closes about 890,000 acres, while the Wash dam would be about 14 miles long, but would enclose only 150,000 acres. About 80 miles of banks reclaim 500,000 acres in the Zuider Zee, but it is estimated that at least 125 miles of banks would be required to reclaim 100,000 acres of land in the Wash.

It may, perhaps, fairly be argued, therefore, that the Wash scheme would, acre for acre, be far more expensive than the Zuider Zee plan.

On the other hand, it will be argued that the tremendous improvement in mechanical means of earth shifting and drainage, brought to a high peak during

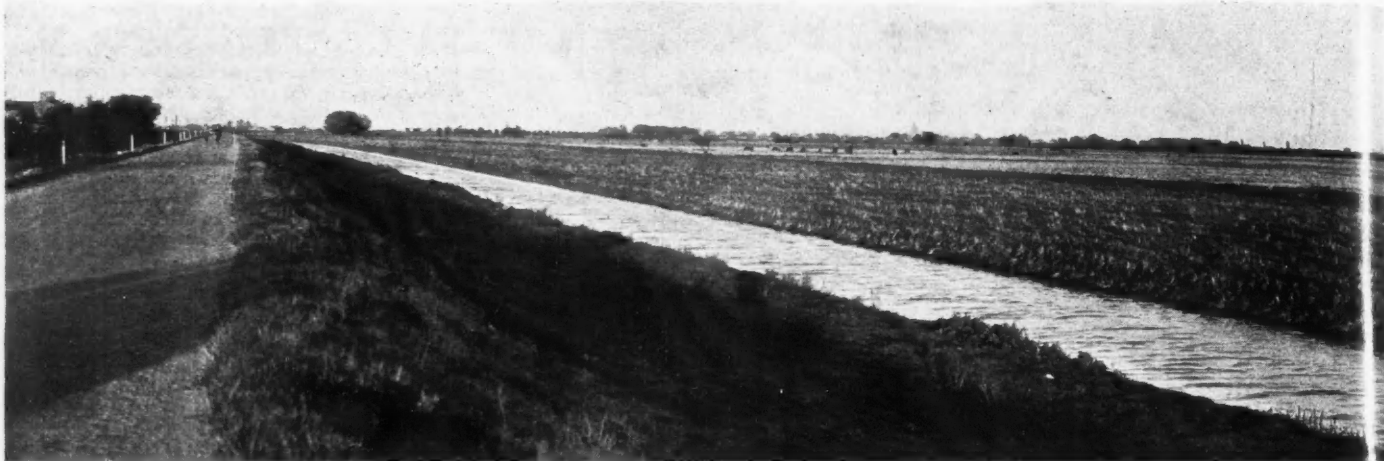
the reign of the Office of Woods and Forests, that particular scheme was eventually finished. The pioneers have been the landowners and farmers who subscribed to the original Norfolk Estuary Company, a sort of marine descendant of the Company of Gentlemen Adventurers, who, in the 17th century and onwards, drained about 250,000 acres of the Fens, under the leadership of the Earls and Dukes of Bedford.

What was done on the Bedford Level, at Whittlesey Mere and in the Lincolnshire fens, by private enterprise, can surely be done to-day with all the vast resources of modern science and Government support. Surely our super-planners, whose brains we are told are so much superior to those of private enterprise, cannot flinch before a task that Dutchmen have accomplished on a greater scale, and that the now-despised Imperial pioneers of this country carried out so successfully in Egypt and India.

The first step obviously should be to unify the interests of all the various inland drainage authorities who are responsible for some 2,000,000 or more acres of fen-land and upland. Next, foreshore rights should be bought out or unified on a common basis of endeavour and reward. A great semi-State corporation, to which private enterprise could subscribe, and in which



A MAP OF THE WASH SHOWING THE LINE OF THE DAM AS SUGGESTED IN SIR JOHN RENNIE'S PLAN OF 1839



A FENLAND ROAD RUNS BESIDE THE RIVER WELLAND IN LINCOLNSHIRE

it should have a proper voice of management, should then be formed. The capital could be put up by the State and by private investors. The scheme could then commence.

As, and when, the main sea bank and the inner containing banks were completed, the land thus reclaimed could be either let on lease for a number of years and eventually put up for auction, or sold outright to the highest bidder once it had reached a reasonable level of production. It is perhaps not too optimistic to say that the land should begin to show a reasonably good return in crops within from seven to ten years of being reclaimed from salt water.

It would, in my view, be highly undesirable for the State to remain the permanent landowner of this vast tract. The State, to begin with, is never a good landowner. Its methods are usually top-heavy, tardy, cumbered about by too many officials and usually end by being a drain on the taxpayer's pocket. The highly expensive methods—and strictly hidden profit-and-loss accounts—of the War Agricultural Executive Committee system, with its hordes of officials and shoals of forms, orders and counter-orders provides glaring examples. The failure of the Forestry Commission to provide more than 5 per cent. of the nation's timber supply during the recent war, as against 95 per cent. of timber from private estates, is another example of how State management of land usually fails to justify its expenses. Yet the Forestry Commission have cost the taxpayer an average of £800,000 a year.

It may be asked, therefore, why I advocate the use of State powers and of State capital to reclaim the Wash, while at the same time denying the State the right to retain possession of the land to be reclaimed. I advocate the use of State capital and powers because the project, if suc-

cessful, would benefit the whole of England. Every man, woman and child would have more food to eat. But I deny the State the right to own that land or farm it in perpetuity, because all time and history have shown that land reaches its fullest and best productive development when private individuals are allowed to own it, farm it and develop it with all the resources of their brains, hands, skill and sentiment. That is a fundamental and inescapable human fact.

It remains to consider the 50,000 acres or so of water that would be embanked and retained within the protection of the outer main sea bank. This area would probably take a roughly V-shaped form, its apex pointing towards the sea, and meeting the main sea-gates, and its two "legs" reaching up to Boston on the one hand and King's Lynn on the other.

It would ensure permanent deep-water channels at all states of the tide to Lynn and Boston and improve water communications to such inland towns as Wisbech, Spalding and Lincoln. At present, only vessels of relatively small tonnage can reach either Boston or Lynn, a melancholy state of affairs when one considers that for centuries both were famous sea ports.

I am reminded, dolefully, when I see the little coasters lying in Lynn basin, of the decline in its fortunes since Defoe wrote of it in 1724: "It is a beautiful well-built, and well-situated town, at the mouth of the River Ouse, and has this particular attending it, which gives it a vast advantage in trade: namely, that there is the greatest extent of inland navigation here, of any port in England, London excepted. The reason whereof is this, that there are more navigable rivers empty themselves here into the sea, including the Washes which are branches of the same port, than at any one mouth of waters in

England, except the Thames and the Humber. By these navigable rivers the merchants of Lynn supply about six counties wholly, and three counties in part, with their goods, especially wine and coals . . . which has given rise to this observation on the town of Lynn, that they bring more coals, than any sea-port between London and Newcastle; and import more wines than any port in England, except London and Bristol; their trade to Norway, and to the Baltic Sea is also great in proportion, and of late years they have extended their trade farther to the southward."

Those happy days can return to King's Lynn. And half Eastern England will be the richer thereby.

Two other great possibilities stand out a mile. The first is that a great protected harbour could be formed inside the sea locks. Such a harbour is desperately needed on that coast, which is a graveyard of ships, great and small. There is virtually nowhere in to which a vessel caught in a North Sea tempest can run between Yarmouth, no easy harbour itself, and the Humber. I have vivid memories of a nightmare voyage in Sir Richard Fairey's great 800-ton motor yacht *Evadne* in the frightful equinoctial storm of September, 1938, when we ploughed through mountainous seas, completely whitened by spindrift, from Winterton Ness to Spurn Point in imminent danger of being pooped. To have run into the Wash would have meant instant disaster on the sandbanks. That risk is faced every winter by countless small coasters and trawlers.

Secondly, the vast area of water thus embanked, would, as I have said earlier, make a first-class seaplane base, equal to, or better than, anything that Langstone Harbour can offer. Such a base is urgently needed for the Empire flying-boat services.

The areas of water embanked would gradually silt up, since they would continually be receiving deposits of alluvial mud from the four Fen rivers that would flow through them. Like Breydon Water, at the back of Yarmouth, they would grow less and less in area until, like the neighbouring 10,000 acres of Halvergate Marshes, all of which was once marine estuary, they would become fattening marshes. Halvergate to-day is worth up to £60 an acre, yet that splendid Norfolk farmer, Mr. Ben Sutton, bought much of them fifty years ago for only £14 an acre. To-day they fat the finest bullocks in England. Who knows that this lesson might not be repeated on the bed of the Wash, fifty years hence?

There would, of course, be numerous smaller meres and lakes formed within the deeper depressions of the Wash bed, and it would be only right that some at least of these should be permanently preserved as bird sanctuaries, just as the Dutch have set aside some of their meres and coastal islands for like purposes. We cannot bow down to materialistic gods alone.

The Wash offers us a magnificent, a golden chance to enrich England in food, homes, employment, harbourage, air bases and bird life. We may throw away our Empire, but at least we can add to our own small island. What man could propose in 1839 can surely be accomplished by man to-day.



THE EXTENT OF THE RECENT FLOODS CAUSED BY THE OVERFLOWING OF THE RIVER OUSE, AS SEEN FROM THE AIR

THE PICTURE EXPERT AT WORK

By PROFESSOR A. P. LAURIE

I HAVE often been asked how experts are able to judge the age or authenticity of a painting. Let me try to answer the question by quoting a fragment of forgotten history—the case of the Rokeby Venus of Velasquez, on whose work particular attention has been focused by the recent exhibition of Spanish painting in London.

After this famous painting had been bought by public subscription for the National Gallery some time before the first World War, a suffragette slashed the picture with a knife. When I read this in the newspaper, I at once telegraphed to the late Sir Charles Holroyd, then Director of the Gallery, and took the first train to London, as it was evident that this would give me the opportunity of making a thorough chemical examination of a picture of that period.

Sir Charles Holroyd allowed me to examine the whole picture with my microscope travelling on a bar, and also gave me some minute scraps of the paint which could not be replaced.

At the time, the genuineness of the picture had been questioned in the Press. One critic said that he had discovered a signature showing that it was not by Velasquez; another averred that the Cupid had obviously been added in the 18th century, since the Cupid's ribbon was painted with Prussian blue, which was not discovered until the 18th century. There was good reason, therefore, for an exhaustive enquiry into the real history of the picture.

The whole picture is painted on a white lead priming; under the body of Venus the flesh painting is laid on this white lead priming, but in all the rest of the picture the white lead priming has been coated with a red ochre priming on which the background is painted. By adopting this device, Velasquez secured that the flesh of the Venus would always stand out compared with the background of the picture. The blue of the Cupid's ribbon was made up of a mixture of azurite and smalt. Smalt came into use about 1600 and I have never found azurite on any MS. or picture after 1650; thus it was clear that the Cupid was painted before 1650 and therefore was part of the original picture.

Just above the waist of the Venus, there is a piece of green drapery showing. Examination of it showed that it was composed of the same blue as the Cupid's ribbon, but owing to a covering of yellow varnish it appeared green. Both azurite and smalt are very weak-staining pigments and consequently are affected by a yellow medium, and for this reason azurite is condemned as fugitive in the mediæval writings on painting. In actual fact azurite itself remains unchanged, and the apparent change is due to the yellowing of the oil.

Since it had been stated that the Cupid had been painted in the 18th century, I took some photomicrographs of the brushwork of the body of the Cupid and the body of Venus. In both cases the paint had been laid on by simple straight brushwork, and I found, on cutting my bromide prints in halves and joining the two halves, that the same consistency of white lead and the same brush had been used for painting both, for every little line and stroke of the brush matched in the two photographs. White lead had evidently been ground in oil to a moderate consistency showing the brush strokes.

So far, then, the picture had been shown to have been painted in its entirety at the same time and before 1650. It still remained to be

seen whether it was possible to identify it as coming from the studio of Velasquez.

In order to get something thoroughly characteristic of a painter's trade-mark, it is necessary to pick out a place in the picture where he has rapidly dashed in what he wanted. Such a place is found in this picture in the painting of the ribbon on the mirror. I took a photomicrograph of it, and another of the tassell on the knee of the well-known portrait of Philip IV, which had also been dashed in with a few free strokes. On my cutting the bromide prints in halves and joining the edges together, it was obvious that the same hand had painted both. And, since the Philip is universally accepted as having been painted

cleaner had, at some date, removed all the old varnish on the Cupid, and, finding the flesh very cold in colour, had glazed thinly with a little lake leaving the ribbon blue. Then, feeling that he had over-cleaned the Cupid, he was careful to leave a thin coat of the old varnish on the rest of the picture, thus preventing the flesh of the Venus from looking too cold, and leaving the drapery at the waist of the Venus green instead of blue. This, in turn, raised the interesting question of whether Velasquez had painted the picture with the intention of covering it with a warm-coloured varnish.

The oil varnishes of the 17th century, if made from sandarac, would be warm in colour.



THE ROKEBY VENUS OF VELASQUEZ. The National Gallery

by Velasquez, it was clear that the Rokeby Venus was the work of the same great Master.

On examining the flesh, I found that white lead had been mixed with a madder lake and a little smalt resulting in a very cold flesh tint. The drapery at the waist of the Venus is covered with a yellow varnish that makes it look green, while the ribbon on the Cupid, though painted with the same pigments, is blue. On examining the Cupid very carefully through the microscope, I came to the conclusion that a

SOUVENIR OF THE EXHIBITION

(French Tapestries, 1947)

ON banks of Loire, four hundred years ago,
They wove each springing tree, each gay
device

Which fashions here, where Thames' sad waters
flow,

The bright walls of an earthly Paradise.

The soaring birds, the brakes where rabbits play,
The flowering branch, the fruiting bushes, blend

To shut the treachery of Time away

Beyond the wood that grows at the world's end.

"A mon seul désir" meets the ravished eye,
Blazoned above the tent where Beauty dwells,

And who that reads it can suppress a sigh

For the lost world the brief inscription spells?

So far, the noble life, the jocund day

Of knights and jewelled ladies—though so short

The distance from these portals either way

Eastward to Knightsbridge, westward to Earls

Court!

FREDA C. BOND.

and the Spanish leather hangings were covered with tinfoil and then given their golden hue by treatment with varnishes into which saffron and aloes had been introduced. I therefore tried an experiment. I got a young artist to paint me a Rokeby Venus using smalt and madder lake. The result was a very cold grey-white. I then made up a varnish according to a mediæval receipt for varnishing tin and laid it over half the picture. The result was a warm and glowing flesh tint.

Recently there has been a controversy in the Press about the cleaning of certain pictures in the National Gallery, and a similar storm was raised by the artists when the Phillip was cleaned. Now we know that the mediæval oil varnishes were warm in colour, and Cennino Cennini specially mentions the change produced in a tempera picture when it is varnished. Is it not possible that the outcry by the artists when the Phillip was cleaned was not due to any carelessness on the part of the cleaner, but was due to the artist's feeling that there was a certain want of harmony in the whole colour scheme, when the old dirty varnish had been removed, and replaced by a modern colourless mastic varnish? Is it not possible that both sides were right in this controversy—the National Gallery picture cleaners when they said they had removed nothing but dirty old varnish—and the artists because they felt a certain crudity in the clean picture due to the fact that when it was painted the artist knew that the finished product would be covered by a warm-coloured varnish?

MISS BOWLES VISITS SOUTHEY

By OLIVER WARNER

IN 1823, when she was in the thirties and had already enjoyed some success with her verse, Miss Caroline Bowles left her elm-encircled cottage, Buckland, near Lymington in the New Forest, on an excursion she may be envied. She had been invited by Southey, with whom she had long corresponded and whom she had once met in person, to visit him at Greta Hall, Keswick.

It was high summer, and she went direct, seeing Leamington Spa, Warwick and Kenilworth on the way. There, as in the Lakes, she made water-colours in the manner of the "picturesque." Her sketch-book has recently come to light, and, as she is as unknown as an artist and forgotten as a writer, her pictures have the quality of surprise. When first painted they would have given her, and the company she visited, much entertainment; they still have power to please.

In a sense the journey was prophetic. Caroline, like her host, had not so far found life easy, nor was it to become so. She had been brought up, in the home which meant so much to her, by her mother, grandmother and great grandmother. Her uncle, General Sir Harry Burrard, was known to Southey, at least in his public character, through his part in the Convention of Cintra in the Peninsular War, and the general's only surviving son Charles shared her accomplishment as a water-colourist.

At thirty Caroline had found herself quite alone; impoverished, moreover, through the defection of a guardian. Her father, a captain in the East India service, had adopted a son, who then lived at Bushire in Persia. With commendable speed this man, by name Colonel Bruce, acted with a brother's kindness. He settled £150 a year on Caroline, and only wished she would have accepted more. He himself, she tells us, "flourished in splendid affluence," and was continually threatening the most fantastic gifts in kind. Knowing Caroline's fondness for animals, he wished to include "a white ass of the desert breed." Fortunately no ship was available to give it passage.

As for Southey, he faced his difficulties with much of the fortitude of Sir Walter Scott, who had given up the Laureateship in his favour. He had to support not only his own growing family, but that of Coleridge. They had married sisters, and, through one reason and another, responsibility for both households had fallen upon Southey. "To think how many mouths I must feed out of one ink-pot," he would some-

times exclaim—but he did not flinch. Much of what he wrote is prosy and dull, but his circumstances will always be remembered in his favour, as well as his kindness for Charles and Mary Lamb (always a touchstone of character), his saying that "no house is perfect unless it has a child rising six years and a kitten rising six months," his feat in composing an original fairy tale—*The Three Bears*—and his brief but perfect lives of Wesley and Nelson. Southey was an indifferent Poet Laureate, but he was the best of men. Landor said that he was "an Arab steed bearing the load of a pack-horse."

In Caroline Bowles, as may be read in their published correspondence, he found a congenial spirit. She had tireless patience, an open and enquiring mind, and although like Southey she was in her principles conservative, she was aware, in a way both creditable and unexpected in a quiet country lady, of the evils and problems of her time. She wrote, among much else, *Tales of Factories*, exposing some of the crueller conditions in which men and women then worked.

When she came to the Lake District from the pastoral scenes of the Midlands, enchantment grew upon her. "We thought we had got into fairy-land," said Lamb, when he and Mary had visited the Coleridges twenty years before. "In fine, I have satisfied myself that there is such a thing as tourists call 'romantic'." Caroline would have agreed with him to the letter.

She came upon Southey when his literary commitments were even heavier than usual, and he could spare little time for the entertainment of his guest. He would have left her much to Wordsworth, who in the eyes of a poet might have been no bad substitute, but Caroline was diffident. At that time Wordsworth's name and fame were, to use de Quincey's word, "militant." He had been established nine years at Rydal Mount, twelve miles from Keswick, and a month



SAMUEL PARR, PEDAGOGUE AND SCHOLAR (1747-1825), KNOWN ALSO AS THE "WHIG JOHNSON". One of the water-colour sketches done by Miss Caroline Bowles on her visit to Southey at Keswick in 1823

or so before her arrival had been on a tour in the Netherlands.

Caroline had a turn of wit. Her sketch-book, which is headed *Sketches from Nature Illustrative of the Picturesque and Beautiful* opens (below the last three words) on a portrait of Samuel Parr, who must indeed have been one of the sights of the Tour. Parr's contemporary celebrity was equalled only by the completeness of his oblivion. He was a pedagogue who in later life made a name for himself as the "Whig Johnson," and by the formation of a large library at Hatton in Warwickshire. When Caroline drew him he was seventy-four and had long enjoyed the reputation of a warm friend to those who did not cross his prejudices, but in general as a quarrelsome man whose conversation and prose were no match for his model's. It is odd that Parr should figure in a sketch-book of this kind, for one of his best known quarrels was with William Combe, whose *Tour of Dr. Syntax in Search of the Picturesque*, with Rowlandson's illustrations, did much to popularise that style of art, though its intention was partly satirical. Caroline doubtless knew all this; but Parr took no offence at the portrait.

The rest of the sixteen sketches are of buildings and "landskip." As might have been expected, Leamington Spa, Warwick (view of the Castle and Gateway), Guy's Cliff and Kenilworth ruins have their record. Then the scene moves to the Lakes;



A STORM APPROACHING OVER THE GORGE OF BORROWDALE

Caroline painted Derwent Water, the Greta, Cawsey Pike, Borrowdale, mountain streams and Keswick itself with varying skill but clear enjoyment. She saw the Lakes in high summer, leaving them in October. As her coach halted near Rydal Mount on the way home she saw the Wordsworth family, expectant of a parcel from it, but for some reason she shrank from making herself known to them, though she had already made the poet's acquaintance.

The Tour was prophetic, but the sequel was not entirely happy. In 1837 Mrs. Southey died. She had long been ailing, her faculties in decay. Two years later Caroline, who had never ceased to correspond with the Laureate, accepted the offer of his hand. It was an unfortunate or brave decision, for Southey was fast failing. "The last three years," she afterwards wrote, "have done upon me the work of twenty." Her own health was never strong, and her stepchildren hated her, a malice sustained in certain editions of their father's letters, in which she is barely mentioned. She soothed her husband's last years devotedly, and when he died returned to her beloved Lymington, which she scarcely left till her own death eleven years later, in 1854. Landor called her, not perhaps unjustly, saint and martyr.

Although she never attempted to make her name as an artist, she might perhaps have done so. With more training, her skill as a water-colourist might have exceeded that which she gained as the authoress of *Solitary Hours* and *Chapters in Churchyards*, which were the direct results of her Tour of 1823. It is an open



KESWICK, WITH SKIDDAW IN THE BACKGROUND. These sketches are preserved in an album of Miss Bowles, now in the possession of the author of this article

question whether the titles of these works were ironic. This quality is not a feature of the contents, but Caroline had a way with titles.

The magnificent Colonel Bruce's annuity

ceased with her marriage, and Southey's legacy of £2,000 would not have seen her far, but Queen Victoria in 1852 approved a pension of £200 in her favour. She did not long enjoy it.

A COUNTRYWOMAN'S NOTES

By EILUNED LEWIS

IT was a piece of good fortune that the Bombay Hunt, after a lapse of seven years, should have chosen to revive its annual Show on the day after we returned from our up-country wanderings in India. In the good days before the last war all the villagers whose lands lay within the province of the Hunt gathered together once a year to hold festival (for this is a land of festival) and to receive gifts—a dhoti for each man, a sari for his wife and a handful of sweets for every child. But now food rationing and the scarcity of cotton have ruled out such presents, and the Hunt Committee devised a different sort of party by organising the first Bombay Hunt Cattle Show.

In years gone by the Jackal Club country lay round Santa Cruz, but modern buildings have driven it from the site of the old Portuguese settlement farther afield to Chola, some thirty miles north of the city, whither we drove that fine hot Sunday beside the salt-water creeks, and through the pleasant country splashed with the brilliant scarlet of coral tree and flame of the forest. Too late for the judging of Gir and Dangi bulls and heifers, we arrived in good time for the bullock-cart races, and here was an event beside which the agricultural show at home, with its "handy hunters" and demure trotting ponies, pales in comparison.

IMAGINE a dusty track of peculiarly uneven surface, crossed by a few shallow dried up nullas and so hemmed in on either side by the local inhabitants that it is only through the extraordinary efforts of the mounted stewards that the course is kept open at all. Galloping, rocketing down this track at intervals of two or three minutes dash the opposing teams, two at a time, each pair of bullocks harnessed to a two-wheel cart, sometimes abreast, sometimes so close that the necks of the couple behind are jammed into the tail of the cart before, while the demented jehus (two to each cart), kneeling upright, beat in unison on their animals' flanks (tail-twisting forbidden by Hunt Club rules) adding shrieks of imprecation and encouragement to the yells of the spectators. There was hardly a race where one of the competing teams did not run

wide into the local inhabitants, but no one appeared to be so much as scratched, and, as for the bullocks themselves, with their necklaces of cowrie shells and beads, and their wollen rosettes, so soon as the race was over they immediately lapsed back into their gentle bovine existence.

The last event of the day was the prize-giving, with a long speech in Marathi from the Government Livestock Expert and a short speech in English from the M.F.H., and the circle of eager brown faces growing closer and closer as interest deepened. Everyone got a prize of some sort, as in the race in *Alice*, but let it be recorded of a people who are sometimes accused of avarice that the winners of the victorious bullock teams begged that the prizes should not be in money, but should take the form of medals bearing the words "Bombay Hunt." Then in the gold-dust hour of sunset the carts turn homewards, crowded with family parties, the bullocks creeping now at their ambling, age-long pace toward the distant villages. The Hunt Show is over.

THE all-day programme had included inspection of kennels by interested guests and village patels (headmen), where they saw hounds being fed and saw also the inside of the best kennels in India—and not perhaps only India. These lofty, substantial buildings can accommodate 30 couple (the present strength is 16). The hounds are now country-bred, but

from famous home breeds, and it was pleasant to be told by the Master that the Welsh strain, in particular Plas Machynlleth, is highly valued. Except for its rough coat, which needs clipping in this climate, the Welsh hound, and especially the Welsh bitch, is considered ideal.

In comparison with the solid comforts of the kennels the mess of the Jackal Club seemed an impermanent home, which indeed it is, since it is little more than a glorified tent made of teak wood and taken down each monsoon. But there are old-English sporting prints hung on the tent poles, and old books of faded photographs where the *burra-sahibs* of to-day appear as slim young Nimrods—and some, some are gone, the old familiar faces.

ON the subject of the hoopoe, mentioned in my last Notes, a correspondent in Delhi sends me this story of how these charming little birds got their feathery crowns.

When King Sulaiman the Wise was journeying on foot through the wastes of Arabia, faint with the noontide heat, a flock of hoopoes passed overhead and seeing his plight, flew round his head, shielding him from the sun and fanning him with their black-and-white-barred wings. Gratefully Sulaiman asked them what they wished in reward, and with one voice the little hoopoes clamoured for golden crowns. "Think well, O my friends," said the King, "for that which I give I cannot take away." But the hoopoes insisted, and because he had promised Sulaiman gave to each bird a little golden crown.

Then the hoopoes found they could not rise from the ground for the crowns were too heavy, so that they fell to earth and became the prey of hawks and kites and jackals. At last a bedraggled band of hoopoes stood before the throne of Sulaiman and begged him to take away their golden crowns.

"That which I have given I cannot take away," said the King. "But I can give you crowns in keeping with your station and they shall be as beautiful."

So that is why to-day, if you stop to speak to a hoopoe busy digging with his curved beak by the roadsides of India, he will proudly lift his head and show you the royal crown of King Sulaiman, delicately wrought in feathers.



A BULLOCK-CART RACE AT CHOLA, NEAR BOMBAY



1.—THE SOUTH ENTRANCE FRONT AS RE-FORMED BY SIR EDWIN LUTYENS

ASHWELL BURY, HERTFORDSHIRE

THE HOME OF MRS. WOLVERLEY FORDHAM

The Victorian house, which had replaced the principal manor house of the village, was altered to its present form by Sir Edwin Lutyens, 1922-23

IN Hertfordshire the chief house of a manor is often called the Bury—generally suffixed to the name of the village and implying that the Saxon chief of the community had a defensible house there. Ashwell Bury lies on the edge of what was the Saxon town, and is still the large mediæval village, of Ashwell, described here on March 21 and 28. Like Hinton Ampner, illustrated on February 7, Ashwell Bury is another instance of a Victorian converted to a Georgian house, in this case by Sir Edwin Lutyens just after the last war. It is thus among the later and less known works of the great architect, all the more interesting for being of quite modest extent. As such, the house rounds off in a distinguished way the architectural story of the village that begins with the building of its great church before and after

the Black Death five hundred years ago, reflecting its varying fortunes as successively market town, local centre of barley growing, the home of a local brewing industry, and finally the scene of a notable demonstration of architectural self-preservation on the part of a rural community. This latter phase introduced work by other distinguished architects, including Sir Walter Tapper, Mr. William Weir, Mr. P. Morley Horder, and Professor A. E. Richardson, the last the most recent recipient of English architecture's highest award, the Royal Gold Medal of the R.I.B.A. There can be few English villages, in fact, where the lover of architecture has so much to enjoy.

To reach the Bury from Ashwell High Street one follows Mill Street past the churchyard till the row of malting kilns of

the brewery comes in sight among the trees—Lutyens used to call them the “gray ladies,” from their shape like voluminous skirted figures surmounted by louvers like small bodies. Alternatively a side-lane takes you to the same point, passing a particularly good example of a wall built of cob—the traditional local building material (Figs. 4, 5). It contains the kitchen garden of the Bury, and here there is also to be seen a wall built of clay bats, a variant use of the local clay-chalk soil which in this case is pressed into moulds and laid as blocks instead of being rammed directly between the shuttering of the wall as with cob.

The late St. Loe Strachey was largely responsible for recalling attention to cob as an unrationed building material, after the 1914-18 war, when Mr. Clough Williams-Ellis wrote the standard work on the material. At this time, when the same conditions exist in yet more aggravated form, *COUNTRY LIFE* is re-issuing the book enlarged and brought up to date. This wall, not being plaster-faced as is the practice for walls of houses, clearly shows the brick footing required (in this case unusually tall), the successive layers of the cob, and the coping of thatch sufficiently deep to discharge rain-water clear of the wall-surface. Where a cob wall is thatched in this way the covering is usually carried over doorways (as in Fig. 5); but in this case the idea was actually taken from Japan, where not only is the material also traditional but so, too, is the fan-combing of the plaster finish on house walls, so commonly found in East Anglia and indeed round Ashwell. The clay bats wall is coped with boards, the shallow buttresses strengthening it having a slate set sloping over each.

We turn into the grounds of Ashwell Bury beside the brewery yard, which adjoins the back of the house. The brewery was started about 1837 by Edward K. and Oswald Fordham, sons of Edward George Fordham, of Ashwell Bury and Odsey House. Edward K. married in 1855 Miss Anna Snow, to whom part of the original manor of Westbury



2.—CREAM SCUMBLING COVERS THE VICTORIAN BRICK. THE PLAIN EAVES REPLACE AN ITALIANATE CORNICE. Beyond, the approach from the village



3.—THE GARDEN WEST OF THE HOUSE. The formal lay-out and picturesque planting was designed by Miss Jekyll

Nernewtes in Ashwell had descended, and a few years later built on the site of the old Bury a house of debased classical type in white Arlesey brick. He left the brewery to the late Wolverley Fordham, and the land to Edward Snow Fordham, North London Police Magistrate, who in 1910 sold the farms to his brother Wolverley. The latter's widow acquired the remaining part of E. Snow Fordham's estate in 1927, and so reconstructed an

estate that can be traced back to Sir John Nernewt in 1340. (The original form of this curious name appears to have been Nernuyt.) The land then formed into a separate manor had probably originally been part of the Abbot of Westminster's Ashwell manor, and at that or some earlier date been detached from it. The situation of the Bury, immediately adjoining church and village, suggests that it was the original manor place, though,

from very early times, no doubt always leased by the Abbots to tenants. The functions of the chief manor—the courts leet and courts baron—appear to have taken place in the parsonage, described in 1647 as consisting of a hall, with 2 butteries, kitchen, brew-house, malthouse, 3 great barns, in all about 4 acres—evidently more of a manor house than a parsonage. A photograph of the late Regency rectory that took its place, with



4 and 5.—THE KITCHEN GARDEN WALL. A GOOD INSTANCE OF COB, THE TRADITIONAL LOCAL BUILDING MATERIAL, WELL THATCHED

its large garden adjoining the churchyard to the east, was included in one of the articles on the village.

Mrs. Fordham, daughter of the late Mr. G. J. Gribble, of Henlow Grange, early formed a desire to live in Georgian houses and evinced an appreciation of architectural qualities to which the present character of Ashwell owes a good deal. Already, before 1914, Sir Walter Tapper had been consulted on doing up cottages on the property and had made some alterations to the Bury. But it was still the not very prepossessing white brick Victorian house with segmental headed windows, odd porches and bows, an Italianate cornice, ornamental stone string-course, and numerous gawky chimneys. In 1918 Sir Edwin Lutyens was asked to suggest how these drawbacks might be overcome. Mrs. Fordham particularly wanted a long drawing-room of distinctive character, whereas the more or less square plan of the house afforded only two more or less square rooms, one on either side of an entry-staircase hall, beyond which was a sky-lit pantry occupying the bottom of a small inner court; the office quarters lay round two sides of this court, and a library formed its west side overlooking the garden.

Sir Edwin's scheme, dated 1922, was extraordinarily simple considering the transformation that it produced. Even so, it was decided not to put it in hand till 1923, when costs had abated. The porch and bows were removed, the number of chimneys reduced and replaced with the existing plain brick, stone-capped shafts of the type he used in so many of his Georgian houses; the slate roof was retained but the ornate cornice replaced by plain eaves with simple wood soffit. The decorative stone string-course at first-floor level was planed down to a level surface, the



6.—THE ENTRANCE HALL AND NEW STAIRCASE

whitish brick covered with creamy-white scumbling, and fresh windows of the right proportions inserted to a revised spacing, including a nicely designed front doorway. The long room, so much wanted, was made by extending the old drawing-room to double its length as a single-storey projection seen on the left of the front, its flat roof carrying on the level of the string-course and its angles topped by lead urns. It is not balanced at the other end of the front—the direction from which the house is approached—but the departure from symmetry is scarcely noticed since the whole front is not commonly seen in elevation. The transformation is completed by the stippled green shutters, the French

pattern of which the builder, Mr. F. J. Bailey, of Ashwell, much delighted Sir Edwin by going to France on purpose to obtain.

Within, the former staircase and the pantry beyond it were removed to form the entrance hall leading to a new staircase occupying the area of the pantry and centre court (Fig. 6), lit by an octagonal lantern. On the first floor a corridor surrounds the staircase, but instead of its being an open gallery it is partitioned off—with glazed windows on three sides and mirrors on the fourth, north, side, where the servants' bedrooms are. This not only makes for warmth and privacy but enables the whole space to be handled in quite a monumental fashion although on a modest scale. The elimination of the hand-rail from the lower flight and the extending of the bottom steps to the full width of the entry, that is, two-thirds of the stair-hall's width, immediately gives an air of spaciousness and dignity, ingeniously emphasised by the forced perspective produced by the contraction of the next lot of steps. The keynote of distinction thus struck is skilfully developed by such means as the silhouettes of the upper flights and wrought-iron scrollwork of the rail, the scale set by the glazing bars of the windows, and the infallible "clicking" of each component with its opposite number, which is the hall-mark of a Lutyens design. Look, for example, at the angle by the geometrical round window in Fig. 10 and see how the upper pilaster, at first sight unsupported, is really carried by the hinted pilaster immediately below, which forms one side of the square recess containing the roundel, the other side of which comes just below the top step and just above the bottom one—and so on. It is this apparently



7.—THE DRAWING-ROOM AS EXTENDED AND REDESIGNED BY SIR EDWIN LUTYENS

effortless lucidity, based on geometry, which gives Sir Edwin's later work its endless distinction, however simple in appearance. The staircase, incidentally, has close analogies to that of Gledstone, the superb classical house near Skipton, on which he was working at the same time. The same French shutters are found there too, and it looks as though the Ashwell builder's trip to France was responsible for the detailing of both sets.

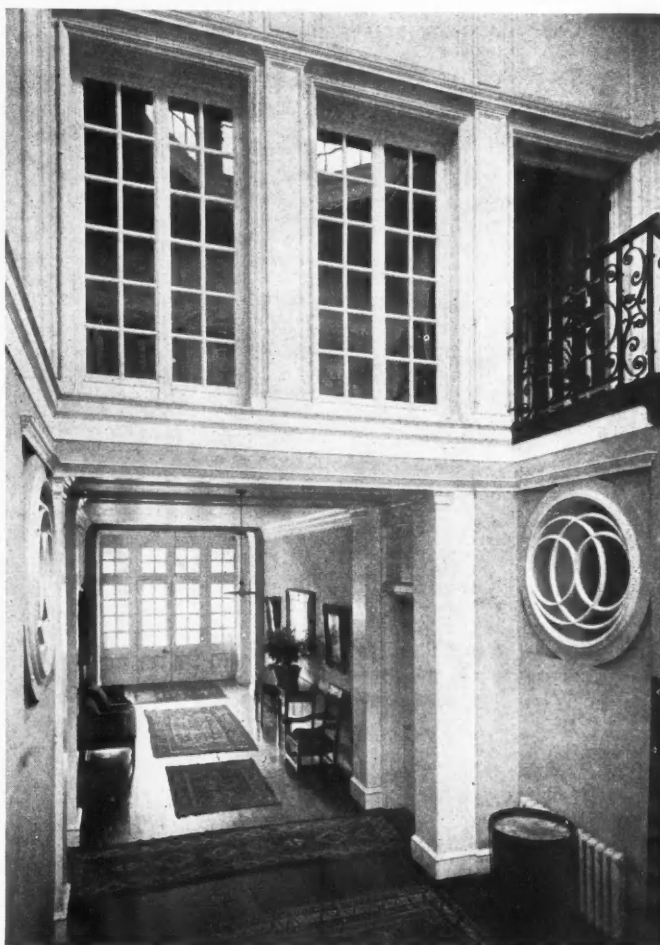
The setting out of the extended drawing-room is equally characteristic (Fig. 7), with its deep, beautifully profiled cornice and deeply recessed window-seats executed in lightly waxed pine. Mrs. Fordham asked for a Georgian-classical character and Sir Edwin gave it to her in full measure in the chimney-piece (Fig. 8), an enchanting little formal composition in which every component is perfectly ordered and clicks with the larger scale-ratios of the room. The proportions of the two orders of the chimney-piece were given, of course, by the height from floor level to the lower member of the cornice, and its



8.—"AN ENCHANTING LITTLE FORMAL COMPOSITION."
Sir Edwin Lutyens's chimney-piece in the drawing-room

width by the *depth* of the cornice in that that controlled the height and so the width of the pediment. And so on again.

Although the garden (Fig. 3) was designed by Miss Jekyll some years before Sir Edwin came on the scene, he entirely endorsed his old friend's lay-out, which fitted prophetically with his scheme. The deep foliage-border along the entrance front is a characteristic Jekyll feature. The garden's point of departure is a ballustraded terrace made by Sir W. Tapper along the west side of the house (but partly occupied by the later drawing-room extension). From this terrace a lawn stretches west between, on the left, a clipped yew hedge with recesses containing *Lilium testaceum* and, on the right, a down-sloping bank planted with prostrate cypress, juniper, cotoneaster, and rose species. This terrace lawn was built up with earth excavated from the sunk garden extending northwards and seen in Fig. 3. From steps down the bank a broad grass vista goes north intersected by another in its middle going east and west, their crossing ringed by four broad segments of a clipped lonicera circle, outside which are four big L-shaped beds. These are filled with massings of herbaceous and perennial colour among a loose framework of permanent foliage plants. A distinguished and unusual component is the tall annual mountain spinach (*Atriplex hortensis rubra*), of which the little red flowers and foliage go well with dark red dahlias and snapdragons. The whole is enclosed by a raised grass walk, shrubs and tall elms, with considerable remains of the ancient homestead moat of the Saxon Bury.



9 and 10.—THE STAIRCASE, LUTYENS CLASSICISM IN MINIATURE. The first-floor gallery enclosed by glazing or mirror

THE FOREST PROBLEMS OF ITALY

By BRUCE URQUHART

NO visitor to Rome can forget its trees—the famous stone pines in the piazzas and in the Borghese gardens, the cypresses, the cedars and the holm-oaks. It is curious, therefore, that the Italians, with all their artistry and intense love for the soil, should not have developed their forests on a scale comparable to other mountainous countries.

Italy possesses more than 14,000,000 acres of forest land, yet, even in normal times, she imported a large proportion of her timber and allied products. For example, more than 250,000 tons of pulp alone were imported annually for the rayon and paper industries, most of which could have been produced in Italy had a vigorous forest policy been developed in the past. Since it takes 100 years or more to establish a capital reserve of timber, expenditure on such a long-term project seldom receives much sympathy in political circles. Not until a nation's resources are seriously depleted do Governments usually begin to act. Thus, the technical forester has to be patient, for his long-term plans are constantly at the mercy of the short-term policies that are found expedient by changing Governments.

During the past month I have been privileged to review some of Italy's forest problems and they appear to run parallel to those in most other European countries to-day. The area of forest, amounting as it does to 20 per cent. of the land surface, might well have induced an attempt to make Italy self-sufficient in timber, especially since both climate and terrain allow a wide range of species. There are magnificent forests in the Alps, at Vallambrosa, in Calabria and in the Apennines. Some of the heavy beams used to support the tiled roofs in the 16th-century Renaissance buildings show that high-quality timber has been grown for centuries, and I have seen baulks up to 40 ft. long and 2 ft. square among supporting roof timbers of the old palaces. High standards of silviculture also exist, and many of the Alpine forests reflect the success of the classic selection system as practised by the Swiss. The Italians claim that this type of silviculture was in force in the Venetian Republic in the 16th century. Thus the background for an energetic policy has existed for centuries, but Italy's strained economy to-day will make it difficult to redeem the neglected opportunities of the past.

As in this country, the bulk of the forest land is privately owned. The State possesses only 3 per cent., communes 31 per cent., while the remaining 66 per cent. is in relatively small units of private ownership. The splitting up of large estates has tended to lead to lower standards of management and over-exploitation. The Italian peasant has always lived on a very narrow margin and depended on the products of forests for fodder for his cattle, fuel, and often for his own food, as well as for

packing materials, stakes and timber for his farm. This intense demand for small-dimensioned products developed the growth of wood on the coppice systems so prevalent in England until the advent of coal, machinery and cheap imports. Thus, in Italy, over 50 per cent. of the forests are managed as coppice, and more than 7,000,000 acres are cut over on short rotations to produce fuel and minor products. Owing to the war and to sporadic control in the past, about a third of this area has deteriorated. Too-frequent cutting and grazing, forced upon the owners by scarcity of fuel and fodder, is gradually reducing productivity, and, in most areas I have seen, the density of stocking is very low. The delicately balanced relationship between forestry and agriculture is apparent everywhere. Denuded mountain-sides now present serious problems of erosion and during last winter were responsible for extensive damage by floods.

In about 4,250,000 acres of high forest, over 75 per cent. bear coniferous crops, mostly concentrated in the northern Alpine regions. There, Norway spruce and silver fir are most common, though larch and Scotch pine also occur. In south and central Italy, about 250,000 acres carry similar species, but include about 70,000

acres of Corsican pine in Calabria and Sicily. A few forests of stone pine (*P. pinea*) and Aleppo pine (*P. halepensis*) also lie in the south. From these coniferous areas come most of Italy's constructional timbers.

Of hardwood high forest, beech and various species of oak form the main species. Apart from a few stands of exceptionally fine beech in the Julian Alps the average quality is low. The oak forests are situated in central and southern Italy, and an important export is derived from the cork-oaks (*Quercus Suber*). The quality of these forests as a whole is also low, owing to fires, grazing and overcutting. In the oak forests, pigs still feed on the acorns, a practice the French forestry service had so much difficulty in limiting in France in the 18th-century. Herds of pigs may still be seen feeding on acorns in the Forest of Dean in England, and this ancient communal right, together with grazing, has exercised the minds of foresters in most countries from early times.

An interesting feature of the hardwood forests is some 750,000 acres of chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) grown primarily for the nuts. Anyone who has eaten the *marrons glacés* displayed by almost any confectioner in Italy knows their quality, and in parts of northern Italy chestnut flour forms the staple food of the population.

At the moment the Italian Forestry Corps is seriously concerned at the incidence of two diseases, *Phytophthora cambivora* and *Endothia parasitica*. In the U.S.A. chestnuts have been virtually wiped out by the latter disease. Through the medium of U.N.R.R.A., Italian experts have been sent to the U.S.A. in order to study the disease and to further attempts to breed disease-resistant varieties. Bearing in mind that 80 per cent. of Italy's yield of timber is hardwood, and that most of that is used for fuel and charcoal, the fact remains that only 20 per cent. is available for the production of constructional and industrial timber.

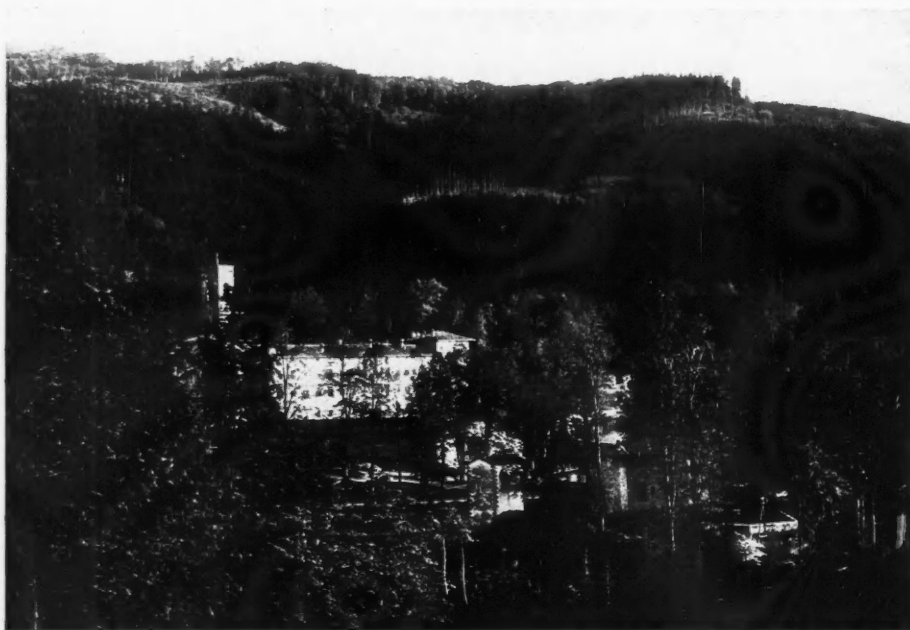
Without further reducing stocks of established forest that means that Italy must import at least half of her requirements. It is doubtful if this will be possible for some time, and therefore there will tend to be further inroads upon her stocks.

In Britain, a partial census taken during the war revealed a surprising stock of timber available in scattered groups and in small woods and hedgerows. This hedgerow-timber has been neglected and seldom regarded as an active form of income except, for example, in south-east England, where the cultivation of bat willows developed.

In Italy, hardwoods such as elms, ash, willow and maple are used to support vines and are pollarded for fuel. Poplars have been



RECLAMATION OF ERODED HILLSIDES: TERRACED PLANTING OF CYPRESS AND EUCALYPTUS

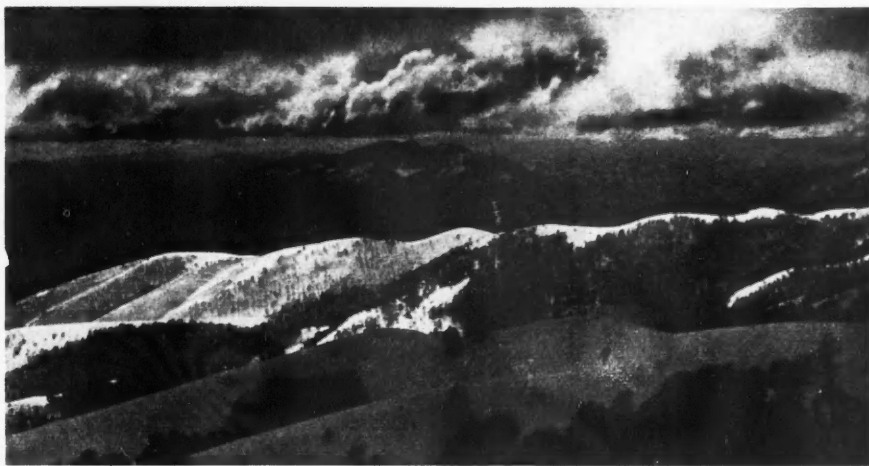


SPRUCE AND SILVER FIR IN THE CONIFEROUS FORESTS OF VALLAMBROSA

extensively grown as an adjunct to farm crops, particularly in the Po valley, and it has been estimated that in this district alone as many as 47,000 acres are productive of poplar suitable for manufacture. Moreover, in the dry, hot climate of the Mediterranean, trees are valued for both shelter and shade, and it is generally recognised that agricultural areas denuded of trees lose their productivity. The farm trees of Italy are proving to be a valuable asset, and the shortage of timber and fuel in Britain has also awakened an interest in farm timber that it is hoped may lead to improved methods of cultivation.

The bulk of British hedgerow-timber is of poor quality, heavily branched, and usually full of nails and wire. As in Britain, the cutting of hedgerows and shelter belts increases daily, and in parts of Italy, particularly in Sicily, overcutting of field trees has driven the farmer to using even canes for fuel.

With this brief survey of Italy's forest problems it is interesting to know the opinions of some of those who have been considering their solution. The Allied Commission, and the U.N.R.R.A., have both appointed experts to report on a future programme. The opinions of one of Italy's leading foresters, Professor G. Vari, Director of the Institute of Silviculture in Florence, show a deep understanding of the present situation. The Professor's concept of forestry is to integrate the demands of agriculture, economics and sociology, and he places high upon the list of necessities the need for



COPPICE WOODS ON THE MOUNTAINS 80 MILES EAST OF ROME

effectively applied without simultaneous improvement of pastures.

In the State forests, replanting of felled areas and improving the annual growth of existing stands are the immediate objectives, and it is not proposed to enter into the techniques involved. Sufficient experimental data exist to increase the planting of the faster-growing exotics, such as Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga*

An interesting development has been the work of soil conservation, in which the planting of trees has figured prominently. Local organisations of landowners and tenant farmers formed what were termed *Bonifica*. They elected an organisation that employed the necessary labour and technicians, and contributed towards the cost of land reclamation. The State also contributed, and these voluntary bodies have



STONE PINES IN THE BORGHESI GARDENS IN ROME. (Right) COPPICE OAK (*QUERCUS RUBRA*), A SPECIES WHICH WAS INTRODUCED FROM THE UNITED STATES



men who are leaders and who understand the people they work with and for. The narrow departmental attitude is all too common in State services, and it is refreshing to find a highly-trained specialist with so wide an outlook. For example he points out that no attempt to limit grazing in forest areas can be

Douglasii for timber and various species of eucalyptus in the more arid zones for fuel and minor products. Secondly, the State will probably have to acquire a larger percentage of forest land and should, while seedlings are scarce, concentrate on replanting the most productive ground.

performed outstanding feats in controlling floods and checking erosion.

The evils of over-centralised bureaucracy abound to-day, and it is probable that immense improvements in private forests could be achieved by co-operative movements similar to the *Bonifica*.

In Scandinavia, and particularly in Denmark, co-operative forest societies are well established, and they are beginning to progress in Britain, particularly in Scotland. If the State services concentrate upon research, education and propaganda and deal energetically with such land as tends naturally to come under Government control, it is probable that in co-operative societies will emerge those local leaders and that enthusiasm that are so vital to the success of any project.

It is not yet known what measures the new Italian Government will take to forge a new forest policy. Fortunately last season produced an excellent crop of seed and more than four tons have been collected. It is hoped to sow the bulk of this crop and reclaim the nurseries that have suffered from neglect during the war. Seed from American forests is being supplied by U.N.R.R.A. However, it will take many years to see the effects of a new policy, and it is hoped that the lessons learnt from the strained economics of almost every nation to-day will awaken Governments everywhere to the necessity of continuous programmes of afforestation and silviculture.

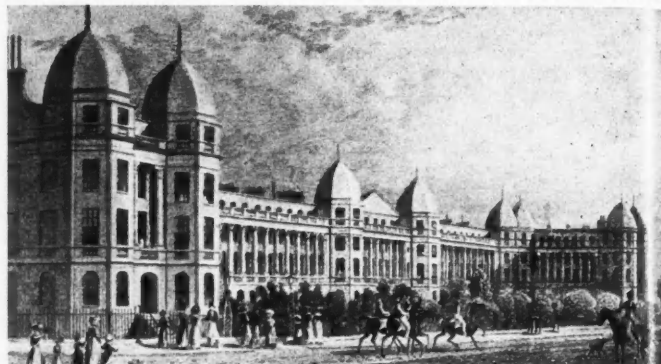


THE RAISING OF SEEDLINGS IN POTS AT AN ITALIAN FOREST NURSERY

Since so large a proportion of forest is in private ownership, equally vigorous measures should be applied in that direction. In the period following the 1914-18 war, British forestry lost the yields of many of its most fertile areas because the national forest policy concentrated upon the acquisition and planting of poor-quality land and did little to encourage the owners of highly productive woodland. In Italy, private owners are accustomed to receive plants free from the Forestry Corps, and also a Government grant of 38 per cent. of the cost of planting.

THE REGENT'S PARK TERRACES

THE REPORT OF THE GORELL COMMITTEE



YORK TERRACE AND SUSSEX PLACE. TWO VIEWS FROM ELMES'S METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS (1827)

THE Report of the Gorell Committee appointed about a year ago to consider the future of the Regent's Park terraces is the result of a long and searching enquiry in which views representative of all interested bodies, local and public, have been carefully weighed and sifted. When so many conflicting opinions on the subject have been expressed in the Press, and indeed by witnesses heard during the enquiry, it would hardly have been surprising if agreement had not been reached. It is all the more satisfactory to find that the Committee are unanimous in their conclusions and that the first and main conclusion is that the terraces ought to be preserved.

To quote the actual words in the Report, the Committee "are unanimously of the opinion that the Nash Terraces are of national interest and importance and that subject to certain reservations (described later) they should be preserved as far as that is practicable and without strict regard to the economics of 'prudent' estate management." There is, however, an important qualification in the sentence which follows: "Differences of view legitimately arise as to the length of time they can in fact be so preserved." The Committee go on to recommend that the long-term use of the buildings should be residential, whether for houses or flats or both, but not for offices.

In a statement on the Report which appears at the beginning of the White Paper the Government express their agreement with the Committee in their two main recommendations. They are also in "general agreement" with most of the detailed suggestions made. But neither the Committee nor the Government have been able to decide which of the various schemes considered should be carried out. Any one of them would run into millions and the taxpayer would have to foot the greater part of the bill. A decision on these questions is shelved until supplies of labour and materials are forthcoming at a date that no one can forecast at present.

The Committee's terms of reference were to consider the future of the terraces "from all aspects, architectural, town-planning, and financial, and to make recommendations as to their future adaptation or replacement to meet modern requirements." But as is explained in a letter addressed to the Prime Minister by Lord Gorell, the chairman, and printed at the beginning of the Report, it has not been possible to view the problem solely on its merits. A decision had been taken by the Government, and this was unknown to the Committee when it was appointed, to make use of nearly two-thirds of the houses as temporary accommodation for the Ministry of Works. The work of converting the less damaged among the unoccupied houses—212 out of a total of 374—has been going on while the Committee have been

sitting. Only what might be called minimum repairs have been undertaken, to provide temporary accommodation until the end of 1952—although inescapable doubts arise whether six years will in fact be the limit. There is little likelihood that permanent, or indeed alternative, buildings for the Ministry can be found in less than ten or even fifteen years under present conditions. The Government, however, promise that the houses will be given up as soon as the supply of normal office accommodation permits.

As a result of the Ministry's tenure and the uncertain date of their departure, the Committee have been debarred from making any precise recommendations of value. In fact, a long-term policy has been made more difficult in some respects by the Ministry's short-term repair programme, which does not go beyond first-aid treatment and providing temporary office accommodation of an austerity standard only. In the opinion of Dr. Oscar Faber, who was called in to prepare a thorough report on the structural state of the terraces, the Ministry's repairs, while adequate for their purpose, will not eradicate the dry rot from which ninety per cent. of the houses have been found to be suffering. For any long-term preservation scheme the Ministry's first-aid repairs can be virtually discounted, and the real work of preservation for a future long-term use can only begin when the Ministry's tenure comes to an end. In these circumstances, the Committee, while emphatic in their belief that the terraces should be preserved, have confined themselves to laying down general principles in accordance with which any future decisions should be taken when the time comes.

Most of the witnesses called were agreed about the historic and architectural importance of Nash's Regent's Park scheme as an example of town-planning, and though opinions varied about the merits of the individual buildings, their value as a scenic background to the Park

was generally recognised. Where disagreement immediately appeared was over the practicability of preservation both from the point of view of cost and of the existing condition of the buildings. Opinions about the structural soundness or unsoundness of the houses differed widely, and because no reliable evidence was forthcoming, Dr. Faber was called in to make a thorough examination of the terraces. His findings, printed separately as an appendix, dominate the whole report.

Dr. Faber found that nearly all the buildings are affected by dry rot. "The impression indelibly left in my mind is that nearly every house is suffering from dry rot in greater or lesser extent, some extremely badly and some as yet comparatively little, but that spores must be presumed to have alighted on most of the timbers and the houses are therefore susceptible to an outbreak as soon as the conditions of damp and temperature become suitable." The effects of the dry rot are often not apparent from a cursory inspection, and its full extent was only revealed when the rooms were stripped. The repairs being carried out by the Ministry, involving removal of plaster, gave Dr. Faber and his experts ample opportunity for discovering the true state of affairs. Attack from dry rot must in many instances have begun years before the war, through water seeping in owing to initial defects in Nash's building methods, and the damage done has, of course, been immensely aggravated during the past six years when so many of the houses have stood exposed to the ravages of the weather, some roofless and a great many more windowless, as a result of the air raids. The reliance which Nash and his builders placed on timber for structural work—for lintels, for stud partitions carrying three and sometimes four floors, and for trusses to take the weight of a main wall where a portico projects in front of it—makes the problem of dealing effectively with the dry rot

vastly more difficult. (It is also potentially a serious fire risk.) Even if all affected timber were removed and the rest pressure-impregnated, and all possible steps were taken to eliminate damp, Dr. Faber cannot guarantee that new outbreaks would not occur. The spores get into the mortar joints and even treatment of the brickwork with a lamp has failed to eliminate the fungus.

Dr. Faber also reported cracks and settlements—many of them probably of old standing—lack of flashing, whereby damp has penetrated, and shoddy construction of porticos; but none of these other defects is comparable in seriousness with the dry-rot problem. None the less, Dr. Faber believes that "if it is desired to repair the houses, it can be done." One solution which he suggests is to remove all timber—in fact, gut the interiors—and insert light con-



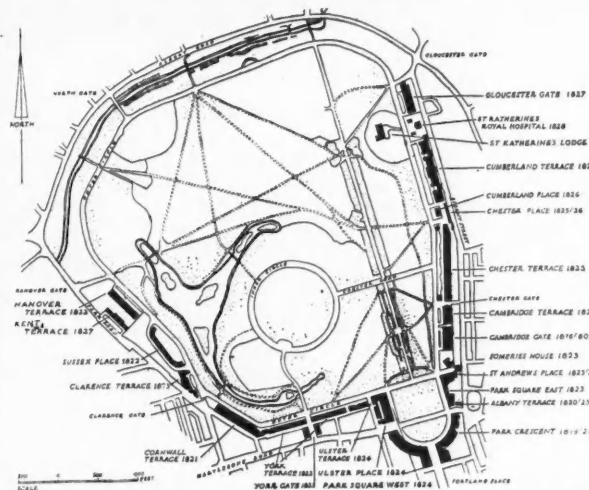
CUMBERLAND TERRACE BEFORE THE WAR

crete floors carried on an internal structure of reinforced concrete or structural steel-work. Besides solving the problem of dry rot and reducing fire risk, this plan if adopted would stiffen up the buildings generally and increase their length of life.

The Committee had before them plans prepared in 1943 by Mr. Louis de Soissons for converting 18 houses in York Terrace into 8 houses and 16 flats. York Terrace was chosen as an example because it presents considerable difficulties owing to the narrowness of the site—difficulties which Mr. de Soissons's scheme successfully overcame. Conversion to flats, or part houses, part flats, is shown to be perfectly feasible, though Mr. de Soissons would not guarantee a life of more than fifty years for the converted buildings. The cost, however, would be heavy: for 18 houses at present prices rather over £200,000, giving the formidable figure of approximately £4,200,000 for all 374 houses under review. Complete rebuilding to the existing designs would, however, cost £1,000,000 and £6,000,000 if the fronts were faced in Portland stone. With these figures may be compared Dr. Faber's estimates for putting back the houses into their former condition but without replanning and conversion.

Long-term structural repairs ...	£1,350,000
Ditto with modernisation but no lifts ...	£2,100,000
Ditto with lifts ...	£2,600,000
Ditto with concrete floors and frame to carry them ...	£3,800,000

In recommending the preservation of the terraces, the Committee except a group at the south-east corner of the Park, comprising Someries House, which has been much altered, Cambridge Gate, a heavy Victorian terrace built in 1876-80 on the site of the old Coliseum, and the adjoining Cambridge Terrace, perhaps the poorest of the Regency buildings. Here they follow the advice given by the Fine Art Commission, which with these exceptions and also that of Gloucester Terrace (the most northerly on the east side of the Park), advocated the preservation of the lay-out of the terraces and of their elevations with a view to reconstructing the houses behind "in the most advantageous and economical way." With some inconsistency the Committee, after expressing their unanimous opinion that the terraces should be preserved, go on to enumerate those "which must at all



PLAN OF REGENT'S PARK SHOWING THE TERRACES REVIEWED BY THE GORELL COMMITTEE

costs be restored and preserved." These are Hanover Terrace, Sussex Place, Cornwall Terrace, York Gate, Park Crescent, Chester and Cumberland Terraces. York Terrace, though "not of quite the same architectural interest," is also recommended for preservation.

While in favour of maintaining the terraces for residential use, the Committee have an open mind on the question of reconditioning the houses in their present form or converting to flats. "A combination of these two methods is feasible." Use as offices or hotels is deprecated. But the Committee are favourable to the proposal made by representatives of London University that a portion of the terraces should be made available as soon as possible for students' hostels on reasonable terms. They were also approached by the London Society about the possibility of providing a site for a Music Centre for London (now bereft of the Queen's Hall); and the Committee suggest that this might be erected on or near the site of Someries House, Cambridge Gate and Cambridge Terrace, when these buildings are cleared—a proposal which the Government are prepared to consider favourably. Thus a new, though different, form of entertainment centre might arise where formerly the old Coliseum stood. It is also proposed that a new link with Albany

Street should be made by pulling down buildings behind Cambridge Gate. This could work in with the redevelopment proposals of the St. Pancras Borough Council in the vicinity.

The Committee go on to recommend that the use of houses in the Terraces by the Ministry of Works should be terminated "at the earliest date possible," and that they should then be handed back to the Crown Commissioners, "who should be duly reconstituted to deal effectively with this important national property in accordance with the principles laid down in the Report." The implied reflection on the Commissioners' past record is not admitted by the Government, and it is pointed out in their preliminary statement that under their statutory powers the Commissioners have been unable to carry out an uneconomic policy. In reply to the Committee's criticisms of inadequate first-aid repairs during and since the war, the Government exonerate both the Commissioners and the Ministry of Works. "At a time of severe shortage and widespread damage it would have been wholly unjustifiable to accord to the Terraces a high priority."

A number of detailed recommendations are accepted by the Government. The Committee deprecate any further building in the Park, and it is suggested that a landscape architect should be consulted, whenever changes are contemplated. Other proposals include the removal of the overgrown shrubs and trees in Park Square and Park Crescent to open up the vista to and from Portland Place; and general principles are laid down governing the height, character and colour of any new buildings. Unsightly additions on the tops of the buildings, which have been allowed in the past, should be removed.

Few will question the validity of the Committee's conclusions, embodying as they do the results of such a thorough and painstaking investigation of the subject in all its aspects. Where doubts will arise is over the cost of rehabilitating the terraces, taking into account the return that can be reasonably expected. By the time the houses are vacated by the Ministry building costs may have dropped considerably, but even so it is highly improbable that the terraces can ever again be a paying concern. It remains to be decided how much the nation is prepared to spend in saving the masterpiece of town-planning which George IV and his architect gave London.

THE TROUT THAT WOULDN'T

THE valley is easy to find and the stream is as free to everybody else as it is to me. Week-enders sometimes leave a tale of hooks among the stalks that once propped up the falling banks, or on the dropping branches of the alders or willows. The tradition of big fish in the water still encourages a night's poaching on the part of venturesome youths.

It was a brilliant June day when I first visited the stream and I decided that if there ever had been, or were to be, fish in it, they would probably lie under the farther bank where the branches of the alder tree trailed downwards to the water.

I sat still, watching, as anxiously as Columbus amid his jeering crew might have watched the horizon, for some faint break in the line of the smooth water. There it was! A big bulge on the surface and a widening ring of ripples that came right across the pool. I saw the fish and smiled. Possibly he saw me and smiled back.

I began most carefully. There was infinite mockery in the behaviour of that trout from first to last, and one soon felt insignificant in his company. But the fascination was irresistible, and one went on day after day, feeling more insignificant with each fresh flirt of that broad tail. Most deliberate he was in his movements. He never acted on the spur of the moment or he might have landed on the barb of our hook.

I tried him morning, noon, and night, on clear days and dull, on sunny and windy and rainy days, without the slightest success. Worms I tried, minnows of sorts, parr tails, flies; but if hooks were part of the bait there was

never a nibble, but only that slight rise and that cute wink one knew so well. He may have been old, but if he was then age had not dulled his discrimination. If he were hungry, possibly some ancient experiment had taught him wisdom, for his appetite never led him to the point of rashness. He was a St. Anthony among trout, cold to the most subtle allurements of the deceiver. But if a hookless fly or grub or worm came by, he was certain to suck it down, no doubt with a leer of satisfaction.

One day his lordship was neither to be moved nor seen, so for once I moved up the stream without a rise. At the top of the pool under the trees was a likely spot. An old farm labourer was sitting on the bank and asked me, not unkindly, if I had caught anything. He pointed lazily with his foot to a tree somewhat lower down than the rest, and said, "There's another one there, but I doot he kens what's what."

A fresh, plump, red and yellow brandling was insinuated on the tackle. I stole to the spot and let the bait trickle slowly off the bank. It sank slowly to the bottom. A moment or two later the turn of the rod was followed by the whirr of the reel. The trout was as surprised as I.

A few moments later I gazed upon the broad spotted side of my three-pounder as it lay vanquished on the bank! But my feeling was one of apathy, for I knew in my heart that it wasn't this trout I really wanted. For the next five days I went to that stream and tried again and again. At least fifty times I found myself mentally enacting the part of the avenger. But my triumphs ended with my dreams.

By D. MacCLURE

On the sixth day, which was the last of my holiday, I had determined to catch that trout by fair means or foul—means that I dare not particularise. As I turned the bend of the stream there came towards me a lad aged about thirteen holding a big rod over his left shoulder, and lugging along in his right hand a string of fish two feet long. And there, among what were pigmies in comparison, was my own big trout! I recognised it instantly.

I trembled as though I had caught a chill, but nevertheless remarked, with an heroic effort at calmness, "Fine lot of trout, son!"

"Yes, aren't they?" replied the boy. "We just came from town for our holidays yesterday and this is my first day out. I caught a lot of these little chaps with fly."

Then I asked him, with ill-concealed indifference, "How did you catch the large one? With fly or bait?"

He hesitated a moment, in search of an angler's lie, then gave it up and stammered, "I guddled him. I saw him in the middle of the pool. I tried him with worms, but even when I dropped them right over his mouth he only shook his head. I tried to girm him with a loop of gut at the top of my rod, but I could never get the noose over his snout. Then I fixed a flake of paling across the stream to keep him from going down the water, and I took off my clothes and dived at him and frightened him among the water weeds. He got stuck there and I managed to put both hands under him. Then I just threw him up on the bank."

I gave him a wan smile, a fatherly pat on the back, and tottered back along the bank.

FLAGS AT DEAL AGAIN

A Golf Commentary by BERNARD DARWIN

DEAL'S flags were out in the streets again to welcome the Old Boys who came to play in the Halford Hewitt Cup, and all the 440 of them were, metaphorically at least, waving flags themselves, for no rebirth after the war has been more keenly looked forward to. For once in a way everything was delightful as had been dreamed during those long years; the weather was fine, the course had made an astonishing recovery and Mr. Bernard Drew's arrangements were as perfect and as apparently effortless as ever. There were so many players, so many matches and so many things to remember that I wrote a little at each day's end, and here follows my diary.

FRIDAY.—A lovely sunny day, yet with a wind cool enough for woolly waistcoats. A perfect day for sitting in shelter behind the Sandy Parlour green, a permissible indulgence because there were no desperate clashes to be watched and, as it happened, no upsetting of favourites. It is true two of them had, I will not say a near squeak, but some uncomfortable moments. A gallant Radley side (where are the Holderness and Layton of yester year?) won two out of five matches against Harrow, and beat the tremendous Crawley and his partner. The Watsonians, too, only won by the odd match against Liverpool, but they did not finish till after nine o'clock at night, and by that time I was placidly dining. Hurstpierpoint did nobly to beat Wellington, but the real thrill was the match between Marlborough and Repton, old enemies who generally finish past the 19th in the odd match. It happened again, and the heroes were the last Repton couple who won at the 20th after being four down at the turn. Altogether a placid, pleasant day with things obviously about to warm up on the second.

SATURDAY.—Another fine golfing day, but personally I ended it almost in tears over the defeat of Eton by Charterhouse. I have little doubt that Charterhouse were the stronger side, as they were also the older and more experienced. If the match was started again they would probably win with comfort, but on this particular day Eton ought to have won. With four holes to play they were up in four matches; they held it almost in the hollow of their hands and threw it away. It was not a case of a heroic Old Guard finishing with leonine courage; it was merely lamentable finishing by Eton that did it. I am well aware that people do not miss the ball on purpose, and that to play a bad shot is not a criminal offence; it is a charitable doctrine which I have often preached, but this time when my own school was at fault I found it, I admit, hard to live up to; I remained heart-broken for the rest of the day. To see your enemy top into the cross-bunker at the 17th and then to fluff into it after him—well, well, I will say no more.

Repton had another close match against Stowe and got home after losing the first three matches. It might have been otherwise if Stowe had arranged their eggs in different baskets. I thought the formidable Lucas could have done with a less good partner than Scholfield. Stowe possess another very good player besides Lucas in the form of Traill, a crisp, easy, stylish golfer who seems to do everything in the right way and do it well. After a comparatively dull time in the middle of the day there came with the evening a series of typical Halford Hewitt thrills. First were St. Bees and Taunton. Taunton won the first two matches and their third pair were one up going to the home hole. St. Bees saved their necks with a grand four, and then came the excitement of two successive couples going to the 19th. St. Bees won the first match at the 20th, but Taunton holed a long putt for three to win the other at the 19th, and all was over.

There followed Shrewsbury and Watson's; that match, too, depended on a 19th, which Watson's won. But everything else paled before the putt, the full length of a cricket pitch, holed by David Brown of Hoylake (now, unless I libel him, 61 years old). He holed it playing the two

more, and he won the hole and match. Prodigious! Finally Charterhouse just beat Rugby. Two matches all and the last match all square. Longhurst and Morrison, who have now played last for Charterhouse since they were little boys, did not fail; they got their steady five at the 18th, and it was good enough. Once more the Carthusians passed on not unshaken but victorious.

SUNDAY.—Another good day but perhaps hardly so exciting as the Saturday. In the morning Charterhouse and Watsonians was the one obvious match, and it was sufficiently close. Charterhouse have from long experience placed almost unlimited reliance on their rearguard, John Morrison and Henry Longhurst. For once these two disappointed expectations; they missed a short putt on each of the first three greens and lost all three holes. What was worse, they went on to lose two more as well. It may be said that the bottom had fallen out of the Carthusian world and, what is more, rumour rushing across the links had told the Carthusians of it. However, they won despite this blow by 3 to 2 (they never win by more than they need) and it must be added that they had one bit of luck to help them. White and Snelling were one down going to the 17th; they had played three and were at the back of the green whence White had to play a pitch down hill and down wind. It would have been cause for profound gratitude to Heaven if he had laid it even nominally dead; he holed it, and that settled the issue.

In the afternoon Charterhouse beat a very good Malvernian side, again by the odd match, but for once the interest was not with them but

with Winchester and Harrow. Winchester have constantly been going to win the Cup and have never done it; now they came to battle with a good side, not too old, full of cheerfulness and hope, and with an untarnished escutcheon. But alas! they could not do it; they lost the first three matches and all was over. Gray and Henriques were the heroes of the day; in the morning, against Hurstpierpoint, they had lost and it did not matter; now when it mattered very much they rose to the heights. In winning this match Gray won his fiftieth victory for Harrow in this competition. It is a great record, and I salute him.

FOURTH AND LAST, MONDAY.—A good final in a fierce and testing wind but not quite so exciting as was to be expected since no single match came to the home green. The four between Oppenheimer and Holt of Harrow, Middleton and Braddon of Charterhouse, would have done so, but when they were all square at the 16th and heard that Harrow had won they wisely called it a day. The top match was intensely important, and when Beck and Thompson recovered from a bad start and caught Crawley and Gilbey at the turn one was inclined to think they would win, but the others came away again and Crawley's brassey shot to the 17th right into the eye of the wind would have finished anybody. Ashton and the other Gray (C. D. lost this time) played very well and came right through the tournament unbeaten—a fine feat and full of promise for the future. Snelling putted splendidly for the Charterhouse second pair with a club having a handle like an umbrella's. A great lunch to end a great four days, and the Founder of the Feast was there.

THE ROOKS

By JOHN MOORE

WHEN I was a child I was as unselective in my reading as a little pig is about his food: I devoured avidly all the Nature books that came my way, whether they were gifts of godfathers (John's *Flowers of the Field*, Coward's *British Birds*, South's *Butterflies and Moths*), or of godmothers and aunts. I was not critical, and I swallowed with enthusiasm even the feminine choices, which generally bore titles like *Rambles on the River Bank*, *Wonders of the Hedgerows*, or *Wee Creatures of the Woods*. Chosen by women, these books always turned out to be written by women, and their approach to Nature (spelt with a capital N) was soppy and anthropomorphic. But I enjoyed them and believed them until I found them out.

Perhaps the most remarkable of them all was the one that introduced a completely new and original method of classification for the animal kingdom. More simply than Linnaeus, it neatly divided birds, beasts and insects into two classes: the Good and the Bad. Like the Victorian histories, which pronounced similar verdicts upon our Kings ("John was a Bad King"), it announced dogmatically that the wood-pigeon was a Foe to Man and that the Ichneumon Fly was the Gardener's Friend. The illustrator of the book had obviously felt it was his duty to reinforce the author's verdict by means of his brush, for there was a highly coloured wood-pigeon sitting on a wheat-sheaf and looking as bloated and inimical as the artist could make him, while the ichneumon fly, although it was difficult to make such a monster look friendly, had been given a most benevolent expression and was placed on a succulent cabbage leaf beside a Large White caterpillar that resembled a French caricature of the late M. Laval.

Now the frontispiece of this remarkable book showed a large number of rooks following a smiling ploughman. He smiled, apparently, to show how pleased he was to be in the company of the rooks, for the caption beneath the picture declared: "The Rook is a Friend to Man." There was a short note explaining that the principal food of rooks was "the wireworm and similar harmful pests."

That simple confident statement must have impressed me, because long after the winds of experience had blown to tatters most of the other assertions I had read in my childhood Nature books, this scrap of faith obstinately remained, stuck in my mind like the last leaf on an autumn hedge, and even last year it led me into an argument with a farmer friend who said the rooks were taking his barley. But alas, not long ago Mr. James Fisher delivered his verdict upon the rook after a trial that had lasted even longer than that held at Nuremberg. He had spent more than two years counting the rook population of Great Britain and conducting a searching enquiry into the ecology, the habits and, particularly, the food of rooks; and his conclusions were somewhat startling. Wireworms, it seems, form only a negligible proportion of their food; and no less than 84 per cent. of all they eat is grain!

So Mr. Fisher has destroyed one of my last illusions; and now for ever into limbo goes the last of the soppy-sentimental Nature books written by dear old ladies whose young readers were much too polite to ask the devastating question: "How do you know?" How *did* she know, the authoress of that strange treatise on Friends and Foes, that rooks lived on wireworms? Did she carry out post-mortems on hundreds of rooks from dozens of different regions killed in different seasons of the year? I doubt it; she was much too ladylike. But Mr. Fisher did; and if anybody asks him "How do you know?" he will give a reasoned reply.

Will he also be able to answer the other question that arises out of this surprising discovery of his: "What do we do about the rooks now?" Because, obviously, if more than two million rooks are eating our grain throughout the year to the tune of 84 per cent. of their total food, then we must consider them to be Enemies of Man, as the old Nature books put it, or as the New Naturalists, terrified of anthropomorphism, might say: "Organisms competing with man in his environment." Like the wood-pigeon and the rat, they rob us of our loaves, our whisky and our beer. What are we going to do about

it? Now I think I am right in saying that the experts believe it is impossible to control the wood-pigeon, while the rat can be exterminated only after an extremely expensive campaign lasting many years. But how about the rook, which is surely of all birds the most vulnerable to a campaign of extermination? Rookeries are easy to find and easy to destroy, for the nests at breeding-time have not the protection of foliage. I suppose we could, if we liked, blow the nests to pieces at hatching time and wipe out the rooks in Great Britain within half a dozen rook generations.

But I heartily hope we shall not; for it

would be, I think, a horribly totalitarian thing to do, and even, though we should be richer in corn our countryside would be poorer by the loss of that familiar spring clamour in the wine-red elm-tops. For in a way our rooks are an amenity, and I do not know a countryman who would not feel a sense of loss if he knew that never again would he hear them cawing about their windy nests, or see them swooping and swirling in the air-eddies over the new-drilled field or going home at evening "in scramble sort" against the twilight sky. You can pay too much, surely, even for an extra loaf or a drop more beer; and the extermination of rooks

would be a heavy payment. I doubt if even the Planners will persuade us to make it. Being what we are, we shall probably compromise: a benevolent Government will give us free cartridges for our .22 rifles, and the Ministry of Food will try to persuade us to eat more rook-pie; but as the shootings will be haphazard, casual and ill-organised—in other words typically English—they will have very little effect upon the rook population, and we shall go on paying our annual tithe to the black-coated company which Cobbett likened to parsons, paying it and grumbling about it in the way we have always paid our tithe.

CORRESPONDENCE

INJURY TO GAME BY LOW FLYING

SIR,—For some years I have been under the impression that low-flying aircraft over big game, an unsportsmanlike and indefensible practice, had been made illegal in many territories of Africa. In the past a few persons have brazenly engaged in this practice with a view to securing sensational photographs; but such strong protests resulted that many African territories recently made it an offence against the game laws. The resulting photographs are mostly distorted in focus, serve no useful purpose and do not begin to rival the many superb photographs recorded by camera-hunters on the ground or from cars and lorries.

Disturbance to game herds by low-flying aircraft is indubitably immense. Moreover, the panic-stricken flight inevitably caused must result in serious injuries to many of the unnecessarily affrighted beasts—broken limbs, premature births, lost young calves and deaths.

This callous attitude to big game is apparently once again being displayed. Recently I came upon an article with accompanying photographs in a weekly paper published in London. The photographs left no possible room for doubt as to the great harm and fright resulting from such indefensible low-flying over game. In all my experience, which

covers a long stretch of years, this is the worst example of low-flying photography I have come across.

Nowadays big-game photography afoot, by car, or by lorry is so simple, and so devoid of harm to the subjects selected, that air-photography is unnecessary, as well as deserving of strong condemnation.—W. ROBERT FORAN, *Reading, Berkshire.*

SALMON AND THE APPRENTICE

SIR,—Your recent correspondence about an alleged indenture of apprentices limiting the number of times a week on which salmon should be served to them prompts me to recall this extract from Richard Franck's *Northern Memoirs* (1658) concerning the city of Stirling:

"The Firth runs here that washeth and melts the foundations of the city, but relieves the country with her plenty of salmon; where the burgo-masters (as in many other parts of Scotland) are compell'd to reinforce an ancient statute, that commands all masters and others, not to force or compel any servant, or an apprentice, to feed upon salmon more than thrice a week."

Franck's statement does not, of course, prove the existence of such a statute, but it is interesting to have a reference to one from Commonwealth times.—C. P. KER, 54, Manse Road, Bearsden, Dumbartonshire.

A SOMERSET CRAFTSMAN

SIR,—In these days of utility furniture your readers may like to see the portrait of the late Mr. Charles Baker, furniture-maker of Chippendale House, Wells Road, Bath, Somerset, who died at the age of 92 in 1932. He specialised in reproducing old models of furniture of different periods.—E. E. COOK, 1, Sion Hill Place, Bath, Somerset.

HOOPOES IN SUSSEX

SIR,—I believe hoopoes are sufficiently rarely seen in the British Isles to justify my announcing the arrival of a pair on our lawn at about 8 o'clock on the morning of April 22.

I, at any rate, have never come across them in this country before, although I have been accustomed to seeing them regularly in Africa.—JOHN RUSSELL, *East Sussex.*

JACK-IN-THE-GREEN

SIR,—In his article, *The May Festival*, in your last issue, Mr. Laurence Whistler refers to the old custom of Jack-in-the-Green, which he says was observed in Knutsford, Cheshire, in 1938. One of my older friends distinctly remembers its observance in London in Mortimer Street (a street quite close to Broadcasting House) on May Day in 1888.

He tells me there was a huge bell about 8 feet wide made of thin laths and decorated with leaves intertwined; in the centre, holding it up, a man danced, and there were two or three men round it. According to someone else, the men represented a witch, a sweep and a fairy, and the framework was like a haystack.

Obviously, being observed on May Day, the custom was a pagan, pre-Christian one. Mr. Whistler connects it with Flora. Perhaps he or another of your readers will give us further details of its origin.—U. L. ORCHARD-LISLE, *Wood House, The Crescent, Hadley Common, Hertfordshire.*

BEAUTY OF THE BOW WINDOW

SIR,—Your recent correspondence about Georgian shop-fronts prompts me to send you this photograph of a shop in Corfe Castle, Dorset, which, with its attractive bow-fronted windows and dormer, presents a very pleasing picture.—R. W., *Bristol.*

OFF THE RATION

SIR,—With reference to the letter in *COUNTRY LIFE* of April 18 about a pheasant flying into a house through a closed window, yesterday morning my wife found a window of a room on the first floor of our house broken



THE LATE MR. CHARLES BAKER, BATH FURNITURE-MAKER, AT WORK IN HIS WORKSHOP

See letter: *A Somerset Craftsman*

and a cock pheasant, still warm, lying dead on the floor.

Where coverts immediately adjoin a house there is nothing very remarkable in a shot pheasant occasionally making an entry in this manner, but it must be very unusual for an apparently sound and healthy bird to do so. Seeing that my keepers were rabbiting in a near-by plantation at the time, however, this ill-fated flight may have been prompted by fear.—J. A. DUNNINGTON-JEFFERSON (Lieut.-Colonel), *Thorganby, Yorkshire.*

THE HAVERCAKE LADS

SIR,—With reference to recent correspondence about heva cake and havercake, and the connection of the latter with the Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment, my father, who was born at Hull Close Lane, Halifax, Yorkshire, on July 1, 1840, told me that as a boy he remembered during the hungry 'forties soldiers going about the West Riding with a havercake upon the points of their spears tempting hungry men and boys to take it. Anyone who did was automatically enlisted in the Duke of Wellington's (West Riding) Regiment, which thus became known as The Havercake Lads.—EDWIN FAWCETT, *Bearley, Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire.*

NESTING-PLACES OF THE CEYLON MYNAH

SIR,—The common Ceylon mynah (*Acridotheres tristis melanosternus*), which goes about during the day in pairs or in small troops in our gardens and grassy fields, normally places its nest, as is well known, in a hole in a tree-trunk, and the accompanying photographs show two breeding sites that are in certain respects unusual.

In the first illustration the bird



A SHOP AT CORFE CASTLE, DORSET

See letter: *Beauty of the Bow Window*



AT CASSINGTON CHURCH, OXFORDSHIRE: EARLY BENCHES AND (right) JACOBAN STALLS, BROUGHT FROM THE CATHEDRAL AT OXFORD DURING THE LAST CENTURY

See letter: *The Transferring of Church Furniture*

has chosen for its nest an old wood pecker's hole in the stem of a coconut-palm standing on an estate at a seaside village about 20 miles from where I live. I know it is a wood-pecker's nesting-hole, because two or three years ago I found one of these birds breeding in the hollowed stem, which apparently it has now deserted. An examination of the new feathered tenant's nest, in which I expected to find the three bluish-green eggs, revealed that there was only one chick, almost a fledgling (seen in one of my pictures), lying on a pad of grass, root and fibres at the bottom of the cavity. The other chicks had fallen victims to some predatory bird.

I found the other nest opening placed in the thick mass of clasping roots of an epiphytic orchis (*Cymbidium bicolor*) growing on the stem of a palmyra palm, near the railway station about a mile away from my house. In fact, this palmyra palm acted as a host to more than one epiphyte; and among the orchid clumps there were several openings (as the second picture shows), one of which alone led to the cavity within.



A YOUNG MYNAH LOOKS OUT FROM ITS NEST-HOLE IN THE TRUNK OF A COCONUT-PALM IN CEYLON. (Right) NESTING-HOLES OF THE MYNAH IN THE ROOT MASSES OF CYMBIDIUM BICOLOR GROWING ON A PALMYRA PALM

See letter: *Nesting-places of the Ceylon Mynah* (page 819)

Probably the other apertures were mere roosting chambers or hollows made by the birds when searching for grubs, or unfinished nests given up as unsatisfactory after the first few experiments.—S. V. O. SOMANADER, Batticaloa, Ceylon.

THE TRANSFERRING OF CHURCH FURNITURE

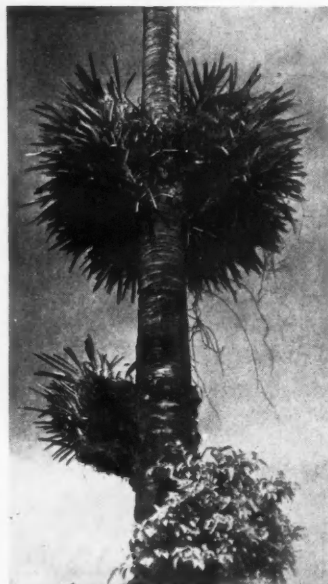
SIR,—The reference in COUNTRY LIFE of April 11 to unrestored churches in general and to the church at Bessels-

leigh, Berkshire, in particular prompts me to recall that some of the oldest benches in the country are to be found in a church not far away at Cassington, Oxfordshire. Some authorities regard Cassington's benches as pre-Reformation (one even describes them as 13th-century) but others think they are early post-Reformation.

I enclose a photograph of the benches and one of the Jacobean stalls in what is now used as the chancel. The latter were brought in the last century from the cathedral at Christ Church, Oxford. One stall on the opposite side carries a brass plate recording that it was Pusey's, and the whole range may be compared with some woodwork still in the Latin chapel at Christ Church.

The transference of old furniture and windows of fine quality from one church to another is almost as interesting a subject as the unchanged, unrestored churches. If memory is correct, the organ in Kilkhampton church, Cornwall, was in Westminster Abbey when Purcell was organist there, and the Jesse window at York Minster came from the ante-chapel at New College, Oxford, when the famous Reynolds windows were put in the latter place.

The destruction during the war of scores of churches from which material of great value was salvaged, and the building of churches in newly built-up areas, must have multiplied examples within the present century. It is to be hoped that some fully comprehensive check is being kept on a national or diocesan basis, for the subject will be of even greater interest to posterity than it is to us.—J. D. U. WARD, Cotswold Cottage, Lamborough Hill, Abingdon, Berkshire.



LINK WITH THE KNIGHTS TEMPLARS?

SIR,—As a student of old carvings, I wonder whether any of your readers can throw light on the history of a remarkable stone doorway that stands amid crumbling masonry in the Temple Gardens, Lincoln. As will be seen from the accompanying photograph, several tools are carved on the door-head, including two kinds of hammer, a sickle and a T-square, together with a horseshoe, all of which may have been trade emblems.

The only hint of the door's history that I have been able to find, despite much local investigation, is that the Knights Templars once had a smithy on this site. *Temple Gardens*, tradesmen's tools, a *Templars' smithy*—surely some Lincoln resident can supply what is probably missing to make up a complete story.—G. B. WOOD, Rawdon, Leeds.

THE MURAL PAINTINGS AT LONGTHORPE TOWER

SIR,—Mr. Clive Rouse is to be congratulated on his thorough, scholarly and cautious account, in your issue of April 4, of the astonishing paintings at Longthorpe Tower, Northamptonshire, which henceforth must rank as by far the finest mediæval domestic decorations surviving in England. Having lately visited the tower, I can fully endorse all that he says of their aesthetic significance. The effect on a first view is truly breath-taking; even the least imaginative must be deeply impressed. And however much one may deplore the ravages of time, for the condition of the paintings there are compensations to be found.

Because of their semi-ruinous state the figures and symbols, which seem as it were breathed upon the plaster of the walls, have acquired a strangely poignant and enigmatic quality. Surely the full revelation when the master painter had completed the scheme could scarcely have been more moving than are these wonderful hints and glimpses of English mediæval art at the summit of its achievement—the beautiful faded

colour, the inimitable Gothic rhythm of the figures, their majesty of pose and gesture, the expressive drawing, and the grandeur of conception that informs the whole.

Some additions might be made to the domestic, or semi-domestic, mediæval wall-paintings cited by Mr. Rouse (at the Convent, Worcester, and the Charterhouse, Coventry, there are important 14th-century examples), but none is in any way comparable with the splendid series that has now been revealed. Indeed, it may well be doubted whether there are any mural paintings of the first half of the 14th century in England that can challenge comparison with the Longthorpe decorations; certainly there is none that can rival those within the Great Chamber in number and variety.

Mr. Rouse does not give the measurements, but the thickness of the walls makes the chamber very small: I doubt if, leaving out the embrasure, it is more than 15 ft. square. There is no effect of crowding, and the masterly spacing of this multiplicity of subjects is not the least of the artist's achievements.

Mr. Rouse reminds us that the royal palaces under the early Plantagenet kings were lavishly adorned with mural decorations. The water-colour copies made of those in the Painted Chamber at Westminster



IN TEMPLE GARDENS, LINCOLN: A STONE DOOR-HEAD WITH CARVINGS OF VARIOUS TOOLS

See letter: *Link with the Knights Templars?*

shortly before they perished in the fire that destroyed the Houses of Parliament are preserved in the library of the Society of Antiquaries. The copyist was Charles Stothard, not Thomas the well-known Academician, who was himself responsible for a belated and ambitious scheme of mural decoration at Burghley House; and, though Charles was a very minor artist, the drawings are extremely competent and afford a reliable idea of the originals.

The figures of the Virtues have an exquisite lyric grace and purity of sentiment that must have placed them among the supreme productions of the 13th century, but in the stories from Judas Maccabæus and Hezekiah the design is crowded and chaotic, in spite of the beauty of individual parts. Allowing for the inadequacy of small water-colour copies, the decorations in the Painted Chamber, which were accounted among the marvels of the age, must have lacked the noble serenity and wonderful feeling for intervals in composition that distinguish the paintings executed for Robert de Thorpe.

The subject painted by Master William in his King's Wardrobe was not, as Mr. Rouse states, "the rescue

(Continued on page 823)

of King Henry III by his dogs when threatened by seditious subjects," but, according to the Liberate Rolls, the rescue of an anonymous and probably legendary king. When the painting was done Henry's worst troubles were still in the future, and in any event he would not have been likely to advertise them in this way! The late Dr. Coulton would doubtless have contested the suggestion that monks from Peterborough were responsible for the Longthorpe work, and is there indeed any sort of evidence that in Edward III's reign the monastery was a centre of production in the arts?

One would have welcomed some notes on the technique, but for that we may be content to wait for the publication of a further and definitive report. Meanwhile, there can be no doubt that the Longthorpe paintings are of capital importance, not only on account of the date, or as mural decorations, but as outstanding masterpieces of English art. Their discovery and admirably conservative restoration reflects the greatest credit on all concerned, and Mr. T. W. Fitzwilliam's decision to offer the tower to the Ancient Monuments Department of the Ministry of Works places the public heavily in his debt.—RALPH EDWARDS, *Suffolk House, Chiswick Mall, W.4.*

A SOUTH AFRICAN CHURCH

From Sir Alfred Beit.

SIR,—The enclosed photograph of the church at Bathurst, near Grahamstown, Cape Province, may be of interest to your readers. This Anglican church was built by the 1820 settlers in the year 1837. In the interior there is an altar rail with a pulpit on either side of the altar; the whole is made of yellow-wood and stinkwood.

When I first saw this church I thought for a moment that I was in the West Country of England. I do not think many of your readers would guess its true location without being told.—ALFRED BEIT, *Wynberg, Cape of Good Hope, South Africa.*

DATE OF THE NUT-TREE RHYME

SIR,—An issue of COUNTRY LIFE last autumn contained some beautiful pictures of the Reader's House at Ludlow, Shropshire, and I wonder whether any

reader of COUNTRY LIFE can tell me whether the nursery rhyme, "I had a little nut-tree," dates from the time when the Princess Katharine was staying there.

As I believe your pictures showed, the house was decorated with the pomegranates of Spain and Tudor roses, but the pomegranates are what we should call nutmegs. As you will remember, the rhyme runs:

*I had a little nut-tree
Nothing would it bear
But a silver nutmeg
And a golden pear;
The King of Spain's daughter
Came to visit me,
And all be ause
Of my little nut-tree.*

—M. WARINGTON, 5, Bevington Road, Oxford.

A 17th-CENTURY FIREPLACE

SIR,—Apropos of the illustration in a recent issue of COUNTRY LIFE of Shibden Mill Inn, near Halifax, Yorkshire, it was found during recent renovations there that an ancient open fireplace had been concealed behind an ordinary kitchen range.

The original fireplace has now been restored, and its quaint appearance is clearly shown in the accompanying photograph. The jambs and lintel are of ashlar stone, and the lintel slopes backwards at an angle of about 45 degrees. The date, 1643, is carved in a panel on the front of the lintel, but the figure 4 is the wrong way round.—ARNOLD JOWETT, 310, Hopwood Lane, Halifax, Yorkshire.

DRY STONE WALLS IN AUSTRALIA

SIR,—Your readers may be interested to know that there are some well-preserved examples of the art of dry stone walling in South Australia. In the Barossa Ranges, to the north-east of Adelaide, these walls, which were used as divisions between the different properties, were erected nearly one hundred years ago, when fencing was unprocurable. Labour was then cheap, and this type of boundary served also as a means of clearing the land of loose stones.

It is estimated that in an area of sixty square miles there is a total length of twenty-five miles of walling, which have stood well the test of time; in certain places, however, the



A FIREPLACE AT SHIBDEN MILL INN, NEAR HALIFAX, YORKSHIRE, DATED 1643

See letter: A 17th-century Fireplace

burrowing of rabbits has caused collapse in parts of the structure.

The farming district around Strathalbyn, about 50 miles south-east of Adelaide, is also noted for this type of walling.

One reason put forward for the existence of dry stone walls in this part of the country is that the early settlers came from the northern parts of Scotland, where similar walls are common.

The sweep of these walls trailing over the gently undulating hills is very pleasing to Australian eyes so accustomed to the usual boundary fencing posts and wire.—MYRA MORGAN, *Albion Heights, Queensland, Australia.*

FOR SCARING BIRDS

SIR,—I was interested to read, in COUNTRY LIFE of March 14, about the methods adopted in Ceylon to save coconuts from damage by squirrels, monkeys and rats. One could not help feeling that the marauders must have been very innocent to be taken in by the painting of a snake on the bark of the trees, and wishes that the birds of this country were so easily deceived.

Lately I came upon a device in an Angus garden which I was told had been very successful in scaring unwelcome birds from the seed-beds. It was a life-sized figure of a cat, as shown in my photograph, cut out of plywood and realistically painted on both sides, suspended from a stick which allowed the feet just to touch the ground. A gust of wind was sufficient to make it change position slightly in a life-like manner.

With all kinds of scarecrows familiarity breeds contempt, and the success of this device was found to depend on the unexpectedness of its appearance to the birds. It was most successful when placed behind a bush or other cover so that they came upon it suddenly, and were never able to examine it from a safe distance. Its position near the seed-bed was altered every few days.

Some of your readers might con-

sider it worth a trial this spring.—T. LESLIE SMITH, *Ashwood, Broughty Ferry, Angus.*

AGE OF A GULL

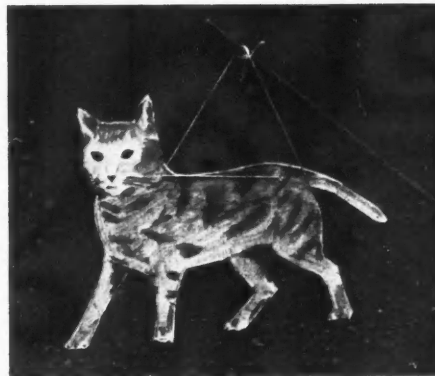
SIR,—As I write there is a black-headed gull with a damaged foot limping about on the lawn. It was here when I took this house on lease in the summer of 1945, and the owner of the house tells me that it has come here regularly every summer, certainly for the last 12 years and possibly for 13 years or even longer.

When it first arrived it had what appeared to be a piece of fishing-net attached to its foot, clearly the cause of the injury. In the early years it was accompanied by two other gulls,

but these have long since ceased to appear.

Last season it departed for its winter quarters, wherever they may be, at the end of October, and on March 22 it turned up again at the dining-room window waiting to be fed.

How long, I wonder, do black-



A NOVEL FORM OF SCARECROW IN ANGUS

See letter: For Scaring Birds

headed gulls live?—A. L. COLLIER, *Newton House, Kirkhill, Inverness-shire.*

[Birds of the gull family generally live a good while, and a black-headed gull might, we think, reasonably be expected to live to be well over 20 years of age or even older.—ED.]

CEDAR-WOOD FOR ROOFING

SIR,—I may be of interest to your readers to know that Canadian cedar roofing shingles are again being imported into Britain. These are ideal for all types of agricultural and stock buildings, since they possess very high resistance to heat and cold. They are also rot- and vermin-proof.

In addition to possessing a life estimated at not less than 60 years, they are unaffected by gales of the highest velocity. They weigh only 144 lb. a hundred square feet when fixed, and can with confidence be fitted to roofs that through age cannot safely accommodate heavier materials.—F. W. HOLLOWAY, 46, Cambridge Road, Teddington, Middlesex.



NEAR GRAHAMSTOWN, CAPE PROVINCE: A CHURCH BUILT BY SETTLERS IN 1837

See letter: A South African Church



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NEW BOOKS

HAPPY CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

Reviews by HOWARD SPRING

THIS week, mainly novels; though let us begin with the one book of our five that is not a novel. This is Mr. Thomas Bodkin's *My Uncle Frank* (Collins, 5s.). The book was first published some years ago, and the publishers have wisely decided to reprint it. I think it likely that it will be reprinted again and again, for it is one of those books that one calls "minor classics."

Mr. Bodkin prints on his title-page a line of Masefield: "The days that make us happy make us wise," and that sufficiently summarises what one wants to know about this brief record. Mr. Bodkin was a child when he paid

conversion, under the duress of hard facts, into a model father and a more understanding partner to his wife, and of his schemes for shifting his too conveniently placed scheming brother to a less advantageous spot.

All this, it is easy to see, could be accomplished by many dramatic episodes, high-lighted "set pieces" and all the other tricks of the novelist's trade. But Miss Compton-Burnett, though she has her own tricks, has no use for such as these. Her tricks are feline: she likes to play with the mouse for a long time before giving the final killing pounce. And for all that long time her claws are in velvet. She uses

MY UNCLE FRANK. By Thomas Bodkin
(Collins, 5s.)

MANSERVANT AND MAIDSERVANT. By I. Compton-Burnett
(Gollancz, 8s. 6d.)

THE PASSION LEFT BEHIND. By Lewis Masefield
(Faber, 8s. 6d.)

STATES OF GRACE. By Francis Steegmuller
(Collins, 8s. 6d.)

ANGRY MAN'S TALE. By Peter de Polnay
(Hutchinson, 7s. 6d.)

his occasional visits to his uncle, and here he remembers the wisdom and happiness of those days.

Uncle Frank, who had owned a large estate in the west of Ireland, decided, when he was forty years old, to sell out and join his own eldest son in the study of medicine. He qualified as a practitioner, bought a farm in County Kildare, became "dispensary doctor" to the Kildare County Council, and settled down in a remote Georgian house to combine doctoring and farming. He had intelligent views about health. "Sunlight, sound food, and a good woman to look after you": that was his recipe for keeping fit.

Mr. Bodkin's memories of this man and his wife, his children, his large happy-go-lucky staff of servants, the house itself, the garden and the farm are suffused with the glow of a happy dawn. So many memorialists love to rush into print with stories of pining and wretched childhood and adolescence that it is good to find for a change a book as unashamedly cheerful as the April song of a thrush. There are some lovely Irish remarks in it, notably that of the patient who gave thanks to the doctor's wife for a cup of tea: "A grand cup of tay entirely, ma'am! 'Tis strong enough to trot a mouse on."

COUNTRY HOUSE TALE

And now for the novels. Miss I. Compton-Burnett's *Manservant and Maidservant* (Gollancz, 8s. 6d.) is a highly-mannered, sophisticated piece of writing which will greatly please the connoisseur of subtle flavours and unemphatic but suggestive odours. It is the tale of a family in a country house, the wife and children dominated by Horace, a niggardly, overbearing father, of this man's brother, living on Horace's bounty and wondering when Horace's wife would be ready to transfer her allegiance, of the servants below stairs. It tells of the husband's

conversation as her medium far more extensively than is usual with novelists and if, speaking for myself, there was a hint of weariness before I reached the end, it arose out of the lack of differentiation in these long dialogues. She does not give us conversation as we normally hear it (or conversation that seems to be normal, which is the novelist's usual method) but makes everybody, employers and servants alike, talk in a highly stylised manner.

A LACK OF BALANCE

The question of balance between conversation and description or summary is interesting to a student of the novel. For myself, I think a book is better able to carry the reader along—which, after all, is part of its job—when this balance is not upset. If Miss Compton-Burnett offends, as I feel she does, in the one direction, Mr. Lewis Masefield offends in the other.

The novel *The Passion Left Behind* (Faber, 8s. 6d.) is a posthumously published work by the poet Laureate's son. It is the work of a young writer feeling his way; and he had not yet felt his way to an assured handling of his story or of the people concerned in it. He gives us whole chapters without a word of conversation, filled with nothing but analysis of what people were, and what they thought and did, while the reader's mind is crying out all the time for some act or word on the part of the characters themselves which would permit the author to be forgotten for a while.

I am thinking of passages like this: "Vincent became annoyed. There were certain kinds of behaviour that he disliked. He could be hard when he chose. He told Alex that he was ignorant, showed him that he did not find him so very charming, was not necessarily very interested in him, might not want to see him often again. This scene occurred when Alex had

gone to see Vincent at his house. After it they did not meet for six weeks."

All this writing round the matter is dullish. The author should write of the matter. We should have the scene, whatever it may have amounted to, between Alex and Vincent, and then we could form our own conclusions about the scene's significance. However, as Mr. Somerset Maugham has said, a novelist must learn his job at the expense of the public, and there is evidence enough here that Mr. Lewis Masfield would have learned his job.

CLASH OF PERSONALITIES

The story, briefly, is of this young Alex Durness, a handy-man in a publisher's office, who suffered from what the psychologists call an inferiority complex. He had been to a not well known public school, and was then pitched forked by his father into London to seek or swim. He knew himself to be ignorant, and was dreadfully conscious of anyone with a university background and social ease. He was plagued, too, by a feeling of the worthlessness of the life he was leading. "To be of some use, to work with people who believed in the same kind of things which he believed in: he felt that such hopes were pardonable."

Edward Kettlewell, another youth in the office, is of a different breed. No better educated than Alex, but with more façade, with no belief in anything but the making of money, he inevitably finds himself in conflict with the other, and this conflict is the psychological heart of the story. The confusion is that Alex comes at last to see that there is no reason why he should take the conflict with such down seriousness. Men like Edward follow their own stars. Well, let them, and let him, Alex, follow his. "He must not try to be 'good': he saw that. For it was his duty in life to struggle along as best he could, recognising his friends, resisting his enemies. . . . He must take things as they came."

This is the work of a young writer who was, in the finest sense of the word serious-minded, and who would, no doubt, have been able soon to match his method with his mood.

AN AMBITIOUS WOMAN

Francis Steegmuller's *States of Grace* (Collins, 8s. 6d.) is a diverting, irreverent book, which will almost certainly find itself on the "Index" in all Roman Catholic countries. The setting is the Egyptian town of Bahari, but the theme is the purchasing power of American dollars. Miss Flanagan was anxious to become a nun, but she thought she had better, first, help her brother through the seminary. He was a promising boy, and, when a proposal of marriage came along, Miss Flanagan accepted it because, her brother being then already on the Cathedral staff of Monhegan City, U.S.A., it was clear that it was "prominent and wealthy laymen like Tom Brennan who were able to see to it that the proper monsignor was chosen bishop." So Miss Flanagan married Mr. Brennan, and her brother did indeed become bishop.

All this had happened before the story starts, and now we find ourselves in Bahari, which has a large Catholic population. Mr. Brennan (of scandalous life) dead, and his widow turning her thoughts back to her old ambition to become a nun. Meantime, as indomitable and interfering as Mrs. Proudie, and far more wealthy, she, with the backing of her grateful brother, is running the affairs of the Church and the Church School in Bahari.

How she did at last become

Mother Mary Immaculata, but how her hopes of controlling everything at Bahari were brought to nothing by a young priest whom her brother had sent out thinking he would be clay in her hands, is the theme of the book. It is enlivened with a wide range of characters and a ceaseless flow of incident, and it should offend nobody whose interest is in something deeper than the forms of the Church.

NOVEL OF VITALITY

Hutchinson have republished Peter de Polnay's *Angry Man's Tale* (7s. 6d.) which first appeared in 1938. The story is of a young artist who met an English girl in Spain, loved her and was, it seemed, loved by her, and was then "turned down flat." In the course of time, he learned that she was a liar about her social origins, that she had been unchaste from girlhood, that she was, in fact, everything, as they say, a woman should not be. While nursing his wounds, our artist meets in Majorca a beautiful and attractive Englishwoman. She becomes widowed during their acquaintance, and falls in love with him, and he marries her. She is the antithesis of the woman whose image is in his heart. Yet, even on his wedding day it is of this woman, not of his wife, that he is thinking.

Mr. de Polnay makes of this a deeply interesting novel. Scene, character and situation all have vitality and distinction.

RIDING BOOKS

A USEFUL selection of riding books is now available for almost every class and pocket—if they are not already sold out. A useful book for the young idea—and the old hand as well for that matter—is *The Guide to Pony Club Tests*, by Colonel Sir John Lees, Bt. (Lockwood, 6s.). Informatively illustrated by Joan Dixon, it covers in a practical way the Pony Club test syllabus, and a lot more besides.

There follow two books written for the adult beginner who has possibly never approached a horse personally before. The first, *The Right Way to Ride a Horse*, by W. H. Walter (Andrew G. Elliot, *Right Way Books*, 4s. 6d.), is a plain book of accurate instruction without any frills and strictly within certain self-imposed limits; and the author is to be congratulated on the amount he has been able to say within those limits. The second is *Riding*, by Lt.-Col. C. E. G. Hope (Pitmans, 7s. 6d.). This book caters for all ages and degrees of proficiency. The information is given with lightness of touch and good humour; a feature is an unusually clear diagram showing the points of a horse.

Coming to the upper levels of horse ownership and horsemanship we have two books on the selection, breaking and training of thoroughbreds. *The Hunter-Chaser*, by Lt.-Col. Peter Brush (Hutchinson, 15s.), is a technical and comprehensive work, covering the subject from the stud book to the starting gate. There is a careful and detailed section on the subject of breeding and heredity, and how, in theory at all events, to evolve the perfect hunter-chaser. *Privately Trained*, by D. W. E. Brock (Witherby, 10s. 6d.)—well illustrated by Peter Biegle—dispensing with the breeding problem, starts with a real horse and in a delightfully personal and entertaining way describes the actual conversion of a young thoroughbred into a good hunter-chaser. The books are really complementary; one tells you how it should be done, the other how it was done.

THE story of Princess Elizabeth's twenty-one years is told in a well-illustrated volume *Princess Elizabeth* (Odhams Press, 6s.) by Dermot Morrah. The proceeds from the sale of the book will be devoted to the funds of King George's Jubilee Trust.



VIKINGS TO EUROPE

BEA Vikings, Britain's most famous twin-engined airliners, now speed the regular services between London and Copenhagen, Gibraltar, Madrid, Oslo, Prague and Stockholm. Aircraft similar to those chosen to form the 'King's Flight,' they will reduce flying times while adding immeasurably to flying comfort. Month by month, more Vikings will be coming into service until all BEA routes between London and the continent are Viking routes



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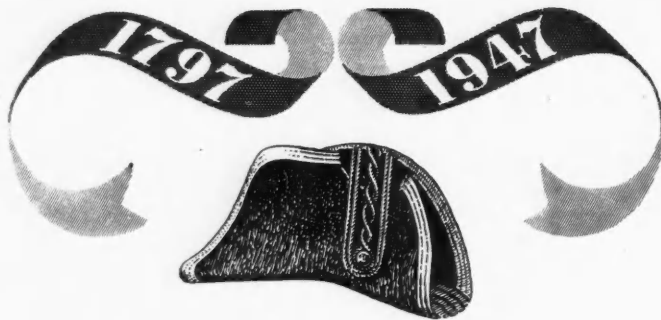
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THE WATER-SPRITE CO., ALDRIDGE, WALSALL

FARMING NOTES

SPRING SOWING

SOME farmers on the chalk in the southern counties had finished their corn sowing by Saturday, April 19. This was good going, remembering that it was not until April 9 that many of them got started. Sun and dry winds were the farmers' allies and after being frosted for so long the soil broke up wonderfully well. It always annoys me to hear of farmers, as one did in a recent broadcast, speaking of "working against Nature." This is just nonsense. The farmer has to work with Nature if he is to make a real job of his cultivations. On the heavier soils farmers have only this week been able to make headway. It is useless to try to force the tilth on clay land. The freshly turned ploughed furrows, and much of this land was ploughed only in the last fortnight, must have a little weathering before it can be worked down for the seed. There are thousands of acres, flooded for a month or more, which have not yet been moved, and it is very doubtful whether it is worth trying to crop some of this land in the present year.

From the Air

THERE has been some attempt to dramatise corn sowing by stories of grain being distributed from the air on to the land too wet to carry implements. This makes a nice Press story, but it does not appeal to me as good husbandry or likely to produce very good crops. What does interest me, however, is an account which a New Zealand friend gives me of a top-dressing of hill pastures with bluestone. Bluestone, of course, is copper sulphate and some grazings in New Zealand are short of copper. This affects dairy cattle as well as lambs. The purpose was to apply about 3 lb. of copper sulphate to the acre and the job was well done from a plane flying at 100 miles an hour from an altitude of 75 feet. New Zealand is a windy country and the fine grains of copper sulphate did not fall straight to the ground. Over a wide expanse it did not matter much where they fell so long as the hill area got approximately this light dressing of bluestone. Only a trace of copper is needed. The cost I am told was about 1s. 6d. an acre, and over a thousand acres were dealt with.

Cropping Subsidies

FARMERS whose land was badly flooded can qualify for the special acreage payment scheme if they crop their fields this season. They must tell the local agricultural committee what they want to do by May 15. The payments are to be made outright and presumably in the case of the wheat and potatoes are in addition to the normal acreage payments which we all get on these crops. Special bonuses to those who take exceptional risks in cropping badly flooded land are to be £15 an acre on potatoes, £10 on sugar-beet and horticultural crops, £7 an acre on barley, £6 on wheat, dredge corn and linseed and £5 an acre on oats. It will be interesting to see how this scheme for sharing the risks of cropping land that has been flooded works out in practice. There will be some farmers who will scramble to get crops planted, although their neighbours would shake their heads and say that it would be better to stand by this season and get the land in really good order for an autumn-grown crop of wheat. This special acreage payment scheme can only be regarded as a first measure to deal with the problems of the flooded fields in the Fens and elsewhere. There will be some land that cannot be cropped at all this season and recompense must be made to these farmers. The Agricultural Disaster Fund sponsored by the N.F.U. is gathering money and

subscriptions are to be doubled by the Government. This will go some way, but not I fear far enough to help the worst sufferers to carry on.

Farm-workers' Call-up

IT is an alarming prospect that possibly 110,000 farm-workers and farmers may become liable for military service at the end of this year. So far their call-up has been suspended. But they are still technically liable for military service. The Government do not seem to have made up their minds how to treat young agricultural workers under the National Service Bill. The underground coal miners are to be exempt from military service if they continue working at the coal face for five years. Is the same rule to be applied to farm-workers if they tick to their jobs? Certainly we cannot afford to lose many of the younger men. I understand that about 15,000 young farm-workers reach the age of eighteen each year. But even if the period of military service is only to be at twelve months it is questionable whether all of them, after this break, will return to the land. Yet, as they are mostly the sons of farm-workers and live at home, we need them on the farms. There are no extra cottages in being or in immediate prospect to house other workers to take their places.

Fruit Buds

I HAVE been admiring some excellent coloured charts showing the bud stages that are important when spraying or dusting apple, pear, plum, black-currant, gooseberry and raspberry. There has been much uncertainty about the precise times when spraying should be carried out. A bulletin lately published at the Plant Pathology Laboratory at Harpenden will be a most welcome guide to many growers; especially those who are interested in a small way and who have not the detailed technical knowledge that the large commercial growers must employ to-day. These charts are published as Bulletin No. 137 by the Ministry of Agriculture and can be bought through the Stationery Office for 2s.

Farm Machines

FOR the younger people who are learning about farming (and happily there are more of them keenly interested to-day) a Young Farmers Club booklet on farm machines has just appeared. Tractors and engines are not covered, but simple explanations are given with good illustrations of the way in which a threshing machine works. This is always an intriguing box of mysteries to the young. There will be those who want to know more about modern grass driers and straw balers as well as more traditional kinds of farm machinery, such as mills for grinding cereals and root cutters. Mill and machine and dairy refrigerators are also described adequately. This is a good booklet to give to any mechanically minded youngster who is interested in farming. Published by the Pilot Press, it costs 1s.

Extra Cheese

FARMERS' sons and working farmers are still denied the extra 10 oz. of cheese that the farm-worker can get on his agricultural unemployment card. I can see how convenient it is for the Ministry of Food to limit this extra issue to those holding the extra card, but it is not a very clever arrangement. Private gardeners get the extra cheese and they are working extra long hours. Nor do they have to take a packed meal away from home at midday. Mr. Strachey should really think again.

CINCINNATI

RE-DEVELOPMENT VALUES

MEANWHILE, if property lies in an area that has been "designated" as subject to compulsory purchase, risk will attend any attempt to develop it or to sell it. On one view of the Bill it seems probable that the chance will be scaled down to the 1939 level. The prospect, therefore, of obtaining anything in excess of that designated figure recedes, and the market will suffer accordingly. Enterprise will receive a heavy blow, and, in any event, the costs of valuation, legal formalities and other incidentals will be detrimental as the delay at every

East Kent freehold farms, Forester's Lodge, near Canterbury, 200 acres, and Borstal, a dairy farm of 80 acres, near Whitstable, have been sold by Messrs. Lofts and Warner.

ARBITER.

**28 Florence St.
Birmingham, 1**

SPRING into Summer



1



2

1—Chip straw and felt for a wide brimmed sailor sprouting wings. Mattli

2—Tea-rose pink straw with fragile black lace laid on the brim. Mattli

3—Crochet straw for suits, wide at the sides, narrow from back to front. Scotts



3



For the Presentation Garden Party; a printed frock, pale pink, grey and white with a fichu top draping the shoulders. Marshall and Snelgrove

THE shops are filled with a multitude of prints—summer frocks, Presentation Garden Party frocks, beach frocks, outfits for sun bathing, swim suits, housecoats. Evidently the designers are all determined that it is to be a good summer and the clothes are so charming we shall all look our best—given a little sun.

The floral prints have tiny multi-coloured blossoms massed all over the light grounds, or floral heads on stalks that look as though they were done in crayon or brushwork and scattered casually over vivid pastel matt crêpes. These are small also; the only large patterns are immense flower groups like a chintz designed for the dance frocks with wide picture skirts.

Many patterns are abstract, intricate interlacing, scrollwork and wrought-iron effects. Dots vary from those the size of pin-heads to florins. Bamboos make an excellent all-over print; horses' heads wearing rosetted straw hats, and haymakers in smocks and other rural figures are two charming designs for country frocks. Beach prints vary from large dots and inch-striped cottons to exotic Batik and designs in mixed pastels of sea flowers, shells and fish. Colours are fresh and cheerful. A vivid azure blue and coral pink appear again and again; also lettuce greens and creamy yellows.

The print dresses are slender as wands with folded bodices and neck-lines that are cut away almost as low as an evening dress. The fichu neck-line and a low wedge that is drawn away each side almost to the armpits, where it ties in two bows, are styles that are new for this summer. Sleeves are often a bare couple of inches long, mere apologies for sleeves, and the slim dresses are worn with immense shady hats worn pulled to one side with flowers under the brim. Pure silks, cut with great distinction, mould the figure with a twist here and there of drapery on the bodice and a few long folds or a cascade of drapery barely breaking the simplicity of the sheath-like silhouette. Molyneux shows a charming print in mixed tones of yellow and brown with a gathered skirt and two deep horizontal tucks set about hip level. Elbow sleeves are tucked and full, left to hang open at the ends like

(Continued on page 830)



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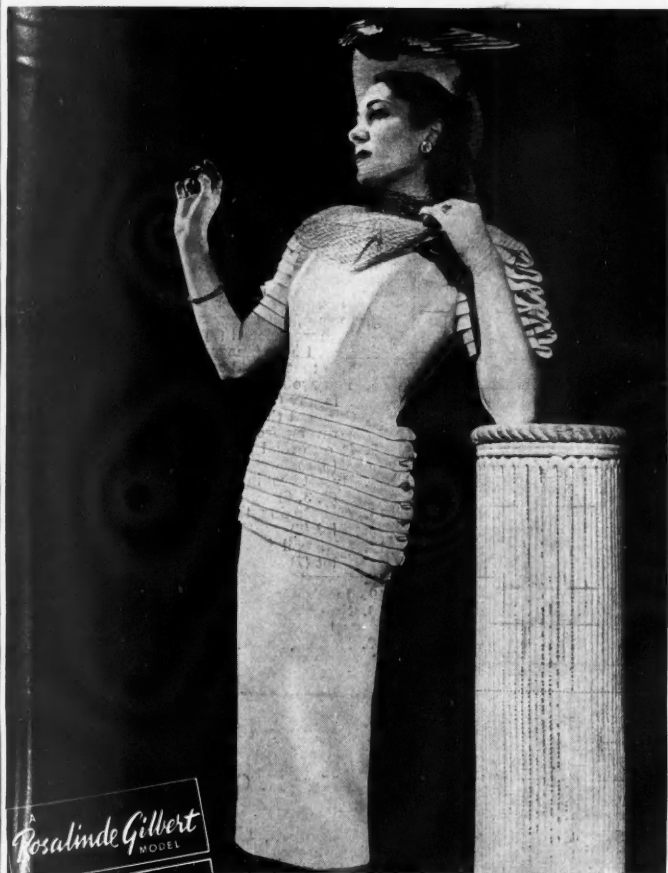


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a cape. Stiebel drapes his elegant prints in a manner reminiscent of a Tanagra figurine. Peter Russell tailors his on the lines of his tweeds, giving the straight dresses tailored jackets to match.

While the majority of the prints are brilliant in their mixtures of colour, there are also a number of designs in grey, white and black that are intended for the older, sophisticated type of woman. The fabrics themselves are firm to handle, matt surfaced, and the dresses are cut with great simplicity with petal curves on the skirt and cape sleeves, or tiny epaulette sleeves intended to be worn with long, wrinkled gloves.

FROCKS for the beach are made in pure silk, in cotton, in rayon, in linen, and in mixtures of all these. The cottons are often dazzling in their colour effects, the dresses with knee-length gored skirts and short sleeves that tie into a puff and can then be untied for ironing. The other type of beach frock is slender with narrow shoulder straps and as low cut as the décolletage of evening dresses just before the war. There is a bolero to go over and hide one from the sun when it gets too powerful or when one wants to go out to lunch. These two styles have been bought by nearly every house in London—the rayon printed in an abstract design in nigger and tangerine on a cream ground; the cottons, by Horrockses, in their wrought-iron, dot and Batik patterns. One dress, designed by Horrockses, in white cotton has a sixpenny dot in nigger or scarlet. This has a triangular waist yoke that can be unfurled and wound round to leave the midriff bare if one wants. The flared skirt, puff sleeves and a cut-away neckline make it essentially a young girl's frock. Another charming beach outfit is shown by Spectator. The white ground is printed in ocean flora in sea blues and greens touched with yellows and black. The neck is low and round. The dress buttons down the front, is belted at the waist and has a deep pleated flounce. A triangular scarf can be tucked in the décolletage and worn as a cape or over the head.

There is another type of beach outfit which is usually a three-piece.



Easy Goers' white buckskin and black suede punched and laced and a sandal in black and white

Printed wool jersey swim suits in flower patterns and gay colour mixtures are a lively addition to the beaches and are shown at Simpsons where there are also sun suits in pure silk, two-pieces with full gathered bloomers, quite short, and square-necked tops with sleeves but leaving the midriff bare. Huge coolie hats, stocking caps and high twisted turbans with dangling ends like a Coal Black Mammie's accompany these beach clothes and an army of sandals in leather, raffia, linen and cotton. The linens and cottons mostly have wedge soles and uppers composed of two broad straps. Raffia sandals are placed on immense four-inch soles like stilts and are string colour.

Cotton sandals are shown with all the Horrockses beach and garden clothes and match exactly. They have been designed by Lotus and are quite simple in construction, with broad straps. They are easy to wear and make the feet look small. Joyce are making their narrow criss-cross sandal with the open back and wedge sole that was the first shoe they made in this country and is still one of their most popular styles. They show it in brown calf with a few in white buckskin. They also make scarlet leather and canvas slippers with points running up the backs and low-wedge heels, the tops almost seamless and soft as a glove.

P. JOYCE REYNOLDS.

Under the dress go brassière and shorts in waterproof cotton to match the dress. Jantzen for this summer show swim suits with brief skirts that zip on over under-pants and a brassière in printed rayons that are crease-resisting, water-repelling, non-shrink and fast to sun, sea and air. A sweet pea design by David Jenkins is pretty in pinks and reds on a white ground. They show also the orthodox one-piece Lastex swim suits with adjustable straps or with shirred panels down the front, as well as the regulation navy blue suit in pure wool. Slacks in moygashel have back zips or fastening and workmanlike shirts with plenty of "give" in the backs. Celanese sharkskin males pleated tennis shorts and a shirt that has short cap sleeves slit at the top for energetic play.

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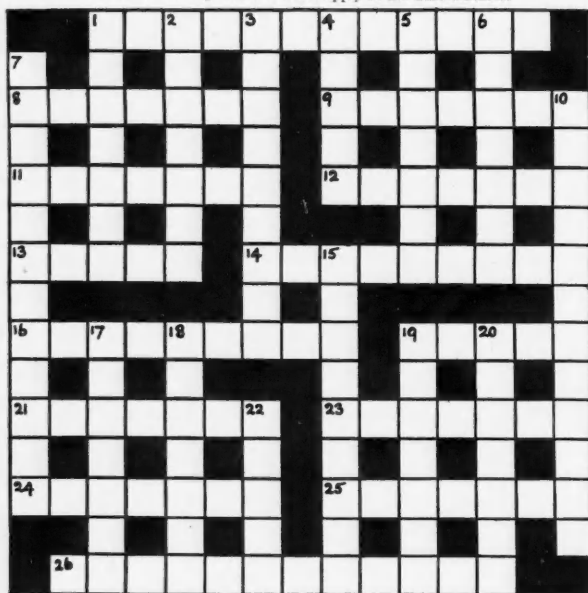
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NOTE.—This Competition does not apply to the United States.



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(Mr., Mrs., etc.)

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SOLUTION TO NO. 898. The winner of this Crossword, the clues of which appeared in the issue of April 25, will be announced next week.

ACROSS.—1 and 6, Changed his tune; 9, Supplement; 10, Alec; 12; Links; 13, Claret cup; 14, Cedar; 16, Shield; 20, Apiary; 21, Holds; 25, Deserving; 26, Cargo; 27, Arun; 28, Instrument; 29 and 30, This Happy Breed. DOWN.—1, Costly; 2, Alpine; 3, Gales; 4, Democrat; 5, Ionian; 7, Unlocked; 8, Escapade; 11, Method; 15, Errors; 17, Handcart; 18, Missouri; 19, Long stop; 22, Sienna; 23, Grieve; 24, Posted; 26, Crumb.

ACROSS

1. You should hang on to this mount (12)
8. Extraordinarily big (7)
9. Wise Trojan (7)
11. Award that carries with it a final degree (7)
12. What capes do (7)
13. Denizens of the ponds (5)
14. For many it was a war-time substitute for China (6, 3)
16. The Sunday joint (5, 4)
19. One would hardly describe her as a shy little creature (5)
21. It undergoes a lot of rubbing and scraping (7)
23. How to make the tart more agreeable (7)
24. Qualifying for a statue (7)
25. Endanger (7)
26. Their attendance is not in the capacity of walkers-on (12)

DOWN

1. Puss on the water (7)
2. In sum, two noughts. What a muddle! How unpropitious! (7)
3. Meat I hate (anagr.) (9)
4. Fish that should be ready for the ice (5)
5. You would expect her to be No. 8 in the family (7)
6. Garment that will permit vocal exercise if you reverse front and back (7)
7. It once had a break-down, the song tells us (6, 6)
10. By not keeping awake he got behind the times (3, 3, 6)
15. Abandoning the trial through no liking for it? (9)
17. Mix, boil in ash, and so do away with the lot (7)
18. Repeat M (anagr.) (7)
19. Jack's climb (7)
20. No doubt they answer in an efficient laboratory (7)
22. Here is a fellow that should be able to teach! (5)

The winner of Crossword No. 899 is

Mrs. H. G. Hill,

40, Godfrey Street,

London, S.W.9

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